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JOHN DRINKWATER

Two Volumes

First Edition

VENICE

UNDER THE YOKE

OF FRANCE AND OF AUSTRIA:

WITH MEMOIRS OF THE

Courts, Governments, & People

OF

ITALY;

PRESENTING

A FAITHFUL PICTURE OF HER PRESENT CONDITION,

AND INCLUDING ORIGINAL

ANECDOTES OF THE BUONAPARTE FAMILY.

BY A LADY OF RANK.

L.337.353

WRITTEN DURING A TWENTY YEARS' RESIDENCE IN THAT INTERESTING COUNTRY; AND NOW PUBLISHED FOR THE INFORMATION OF ENGLISHMEN IN GENERAL AND OF TRAVELLERS IN PARTICULAR.

[Caterine Hyde, Marchioness Broglio Solari]

How has kind Heaven adorn'd the happy land,
And scatter'd blessings with a wasteful hand!
But what avail her unexhausted stores,
Her blooming mountains, and her sunny shores,
With all the gifts that Heaven and Earth impart,
The smiles of Nature, and the charms of Art,
While proud Oppression in her vallies reigns,
And Tyranny usurps the happy plains? *Addison.*

IN TWO VOLS.—VOL. I.

LONDON:
PRINTED FOR G. AND W. B. WHITTAKER.
1824.

LONDON
PRINTED BY COX AND BAYLIS, GREAT QUEEN STREET.

TO THE

NOBLEMEN AND GENTLEMEN,

THE MEMBERS OF THE CLUB

ENTITLED

"The Travellers' Society,"

THESE

OBSERVATIONS AND REFLECTIONS,

MADE DURING A

LONG RESIDENCE IN A COUNTRY WHICH ALL OF THEM HAVE VISITED,

ARE RESPECTFULLY DEDICATED

BY

THEIR MOST OBEDIENT,

MOST DEVOTED,

AND MOST FAITHFUL SERVANT,

THE AUTHORESS.

London, June 1, 1824.

" Me peregrino errante, e fra gli scogli
E fra l'onde agitato e quasi absorto,
Queste mie carte in lieta fronte accogli."

Tasso.

PREFACE.

The Italians call the Preface, "*la salsa del libro,*" the sauce of the book. In the last edition of that most entertaining work, "The Curiosities of Literature," Mr. D'Israeli has an ingenious essay on Prefaces. "A Preface," he observes, "being the porch, or the entrance to a book, it ought to be beautiful: a good one," he adds, "is as essential to put the reader into good humour, as a good prologue is to a play, to soothe the auditors into candour, and even into partiality: if well seasoned, it creates an appetite in the reader to devour the book itself."

Now, though I am but a very moderate literary cook, I am, of course, anxious, so to "season" my introductory matter, as to create

in the reader an appetite to devour my performance. I was, indeed, only the other morning, considering with myself the way in which "this consummation devoutly to be wished" could be best effected, when in stepped a friend, to whom I had entrusted the sheets of my work for his candid opinion, and between whom, and the reader's humble servant, the following short dialogue took place.

Authoress.

Good morning, Sir: I see you have brought back the pages of my humble performance. I tremble to hear your honest judgment upon them.

Friend.

You have no occasion to tremble, Madam. I have read both your volumes with the greatest care, and am, I assure you, much pleased with their contents. I pronounce your first volume to contain the very best account of Venezia la Ricca, that has hitherto appeared. What title, may I ask, do you purpose giving to your work?

Authoress.

The usual one—" Memoirs;" or " Travels;" or " A Journal;" or " A Narrative;" or something of that general sort.

Friend.

All " filthy dowlas," Madam! Why, those are the very titles adopted by the swarm of tourists, who tell nothing, because their method of travelling supplies them with nothing to be told, and in whose volumes there is not any thing to be found, but such general accounts as leave no distinct idea behind them. What a severe castigation has Dr. Johnson given this class of scribblers! " He that enters a town at night," says the Doctor, " and surveys it in the morning, and then hastens away to another place, and guesses at the manners of the inhabitants, by the entertainment which his inn afforded him, may please himself for a time with a hasty change of scenes, and a confused remembrance of palaces and churches: he may gratify his eye with a variety of landscapes, and regale his palate with a succession of vintages; but, let him be

contented to please himself, without endeavouring to disturb others. He that reads these books must consider his labour as its own reward; for he will find nothing on which attention can fix, or which memory can retain."

Authoress.

Excellent! most excellent! To that description of travellers, however, you do not, I hope, Sir, consider me to belong?

Friend.

Assuredly not, Madam. But hear the Doctor's concluding observation, which is strikingly applicable to your work: "He that would travel for the entertainment of others, should remember, that the great object of remark is human life. He only is a useful traveller, who brings home something, by which his country may be benefited; who procures some supply of want, or some mitigation of evil, which may enable his readers to compare their condition with that of others; to improve it wherever it is worse, and wherever it is better to enjoy it."

Authoress.

Better and better! But, to come to my title!

Friend.

Well, then! It is an observation of M. Baillet, that "if a title be obscure, it raises a prejudice against the author; since we are apt to suppose, that an ambiguous title is the effect of an intricate or confused mind." Now, from the intense interest which you appear to take in the welfare of the Venetian territory, and the copious details which you have entered into, with regard to its present wretched condition, what think you of "Venice under the Yoke of France and of Austria?"

Authoress.

It is most felicitous, and shall forthwith be adopted.

Friend.

A word or two more, Madam, as to our modern tourists. I have looked over nearly the whole of the "mille et une" books of travels which have appeared since the peace, and, pardon my want of politeness, Madam, when I say,

that some of the very worst of them have been written by your own sex.

Authoress.

"Oh fie! can you estimate woman so low?
"To our fair female authors pray think what you owe."

You do not, surely, mean to say, that there are *no* exceptions?

Friend.

Certainly not. Two of the best books of travels that have appeared for many a day are the productions of ladies. Mariana Starke's "*Information and Directions for Travellers on the Continent*," is one of the most useful little works ever published.

Authoress.

It is so. No person should set foot on the Continent without it.

Friend.

You have given the "Imperial white-washers," as you very properly call them, some hard blows.

Authoress.

I like to speak plainly. "J'appelle un chat un chat, et Rolin—"

Friend.

No personalities, I beseech you! And yet, if the St. Helena gentry had been suffered to proceed with their plottings, in what a different condition might England now have been! Let those who rejoice at the extension of our commerce, through the independence of South America, ask themselves, whether, Buonaparte continuing the ruler of France, that independence would have been effected—whether British Consuls would now have been resident in all the ports of that immense territory—whether Napoleon's restless ambition, and his deadly hatred of this country, would not have rendered a ten years' peace absolutely impossible?

Authoress.

You have been reading, I perceive, Mrs. Maria Graham's excellent "*Journal of a Residence in Chili*," and her "*Voyage to Brazil*."

Friend.

I have: and every Englishman should do the same. On that clever lady has devolved the task—and an enviable one it is—of first putting upon record, from authentic and official

sources, the progress of so mighty an event, as the emancipation of such an empire from the thraldom of the mother country. What a debt of endless gratitude do the people of England owe to their brave and generous and noble-hearted countryman, the much-injured COCHRANE!—who, placed at the head of the naval force of Chili, in the short space of two years and a half,—amidst the jealousies of brother officers, the discontents of sailors whose wages had been withheld from them, and even the very dagger of the assassin,—had succeeded in destroying, or forcing to surrender, every Spanish vessel in the Pacific Ocean—had cleared the Western coast of South America of Pirates—had reduced the most important fortresses of the common enemy of the patriots, either by storm or by blockade—had protected the commerce both of the native and the neutral powers—and had added lustre even to the cause of Independence, by exploits worthy of his own great name, and by a firmness and a humanity, which had as yet been unknown in the noble struggle for freedom. While all

England is dwelling with delight on the unspeakable advantages which have been obtained, let them read Mrs. Maria Graham's books, and recollect while they read, that they are mainly indebted for those advantages to *the Nelson of the Nineteenth Century*. Again, I say—what a debt of endless gratitude do the people of England owe to their brave and generous and noble-hearted countryman, the much-injured COCHRANE!

Authoress.

May they hasten to repay it! for ingratitude is "worse than the sin of witchcraft."

Friend.

"Whether that justice be witheld, or given,
"Thus far is right—the rest we leave to Heaven!"

Let the issue be what it may, scorn will henceforth be the portion of his sordid and cowardly enemies, and eternal infamy the lot of their inheritance.

Such was, almost literally, the conversation that passed the other morning, between me and my friend; and, as it is explanatory of the

object of my work, and is not without interest in other respects, I shall e'en let it stand as the head-piece of my preface.

The facts and anecdotes contained in the following pages, are the result of close observation, made during a long residence in Italy; but more especially in that very interesting portion of it, which has been so little attended to by our modern writers of books of travels, known as the Venetian States.

From the opportunities which my rank in life afforded me, of mixing in the first societies, I have been enabled to observe the nobility and gentry of that country in their public, as well as in their private capacity—in their court etiquette, as well as in their more easy domestic circles. I know the general character of the people of Italy. I have both "summered them and wintered them." I am intimately acquainted with their local habits, their manners, their customs, their propensities, and particularly as they affect the interests of my own country: a species of knowledge this, which it is impossible for those superficial doers of

books of travels to obtain, who, in nine instances out of ten, are either ignorant of the language of the country they are attempting to describe, or out of humour and mortified at the difficulty they have found of getting introduced into that good society, by mingling in which, real and genuine information can alone be obtained.

I assure my readers, that I have "nothing extenuated nor set down aught in malice." The facts I have detailed, have either come within my own knowledge, or have been communicated to me by persons of the highest respectability and consequence. Many of the anecdotes detailing the rise, progress, decline, and fall of the Buonaparte Family, and their conduct in the Milanese and Venetian territories, will be found highly interesting. Nor are they less true than they are curious. Though I have been a great sufferer by the revolutionary system, and though my husband has been brought to the very verge of the grave, and has lost nearly every thing by it, "*hors l'honneur*,"

yet have I been too deeply impressed with the sacred duties of morality and religion, to commit a single line to paper, under the influence of resentment or of black revenge.

As an honest narrator of facts, I have felt it my duty, in describing the actual situation of Italy, to go out of the beaten track pursued by most of my contemporaries, and especially in that portion of it, which has been so cruelly treated by the *soi-disant* regenerators of that ill-fated, but beautiful country.

To impartiality, I trust I may fairly lay claim—

"Tros, Tyriusve mihi nullo discrimine agetur"—

the conduct of Napoleon, and the conduct of the agents of the Emperor Francis, in Italy, have alike been painted by me in the characters they deserve.

Of Doctor O'Meara's "Voice from St. Helena," I have given my honest opinion in the course of my work. When the worthy Doctor informs his readers, with as solemn a phiz as that which was put on by the Doctors Cam-

phire, Calomel, Julep, and Apozem, when sitting in judgment on the professional merits of the renowned Emanuel Last, and were granting to the said Last full power, permission, and license, to "pill, bolus, lotion, and potion," all his majesty's liege subjects—when Doctor O'Meara, I say, informs his readers, with such a phiz, that "truth appeared to be Buonaparte's principal, if not his only object," I can but smile: but, when the Doctor goes on to talk of his "great humanity and unbounded kindness of heart," charity makes me hope, that the Doctor was a stranger to his cruel conduct towards poor Mrs. Watson, whom, though nearly seventy years of age, he caused to be dragged about, from place to place, until she had become a cripple; and in whose behalf I applied to the present Marquis of Londonderry, then Lord Stewart, when he came to Venice with the present Emperor of Austria; and who, in consequence, feelingly procured for her, from the British Government, a pension of fifty pounds a year for life.

In honest truth, the entire of the Doctor's work is calculated to give the people of England a false impression, with regard to the genuine character of Buonaparte and the whole of his family. The Doctor tells us, that "on leaving Napoleon's presence, he hurried to his chamber, carefully to commit to paper the topics of conversation." Of the Doctor's laudable activity, in endeavouring to lay the foundation of that "posthumous fame," which he tells us Buonaparte felt "such a conviction of," and that his time was profitably employed, I have no doubt. To scrub the blackamoor white, has, however, ever been considered a difficult task; and I am not without a hope, that the present publication will have a tendency to open the eyes of those who have hitherto been playing at blind-man's buff. The whole tribe of imperial white-washers are, however, rapidly finding the way to their proper level: thanks to the native good sense of John Bull!

In the progress of my work, the reader will find numerous observations interspersed, arising

naturally out of the matters of which I have been treating; and some of which I am vain enough to hope, will not be deemed undeserving the attention of those to whom they are immediately addressed.

With regard to my style of writing, when the liberal Public shall consider, for what a number of years I was absent from my native country, and obligated, of course, to deliver my sentiments in a foreign tongue, I am confident they will be sparing in their criticisms on this head. If they should find me, now and then, tripping in this respect; or, occasionally, making rather too free with the King's English; or, peradventure, coining a new word or phrase; I hope they will take the above apology into their generous consideration, and not condemn me to the punishment accorded by the statute, "in that case made and provided."

With regard to my politics, there again I am fearful I run the risk of occasionally displeasing all parties; for I cordially acknowledge, that I have sided with none, but have freely con-

demned in both what appeared to me worthy of reprobation.

I have ever been the firm foe of oppression, let it proceed from what quarter it may. The wish nearest my heart is, to see a country, in which I have spent so many delightful days, free and happy. In short, in the words of a sensible traveller, "My desire is to see independence established, wherever it can maintain itself, and sound and rational English liberty planted wherever it will grow."

If the earnestness with which I have expressed my opinions do not leave on the minds of my readers a conviction of my sincerity—if what has dropped from my pendo not appear by them to have sprung

"Warm from the heart, and faithful to its fires,"

then, indeed, shall I be sadly disappointed—then may I exclaim with Titus, not merely "*perdidi diem*," but "*perdidi annos!*"

On the contrary, if what I have written shall have a tendency to excite, in the breasts of my

countrymen and countrywomen, an interest in the future welfare of the oppressed and ground-down people of Italy, I shall not have taken up the pen in vain. To that people I say, in the language of La Fontaine, "*aide-toi, le ciel t'aidera.*" May they yet show to the world,

"Che l'antico ardore
Ne gl'Italici cuor non è ancora morta!"

Lord Bacon says, that "the modern dedication of books and writings to patrons is not to be commended; for books such as are worthy the name of books, ought to have no patrons but truth and reason." As I wish my work to come under the latter description, I have simply addressed it to the Noblemen and Gentlemen, who constitute the club entitled "THE TRAVELLERS' SOCIETY;" all of whom have visited the country I have described, and can therefore bear testimony to the fidelity, or otherwise, of the picture I have drawn of the condition of its people.

It has been truly observed, that the sufferings of the descendants of the brave Romans have,

for ages, had a perennial spring, in the state of things established by their short-sighted rulers. What the situation of Italy *was*, at the close of the seventeenth century, the reader will have seen from the beautiful lines which I have chosen by way of motto to the present volumes. What the situation of Italy *is*, at the commencement of the present century, I have endeavoured to shew in the following pages. The remedy—the sole remedy—pointed out by that great and good man, Mr. Addison, for the manifold miseries which afflicted that fairest portion of God's globe at the former period, so strikingly continues to be the one that is called for in the present, that I am confident I shall be excused for introducing it at the close of these my prefatory observations. Without the enjoyment of that rational liberty which Englishmen have so long laid claim to, as their imprescriptible right, no nation can be virtuous or happy!

"Oh, Liberty, thou goddess heavenly bright,
Profuse of bliss, and pregnant with delight!

Eternal pleasures in thy presence reign,
And smiling plenty leads thy wanton train;
Eas'd of her load, subjection grows more light,
And poverty looks cheerful in thy sight;
Thou mak'st the gloomy face of nature gay,
Giv'st beauty to the sun, and pleasure to the day.
"Thee, goddess, thee, Britannia's isle adores;
How has she oft exhausted all her stores!
How oft in fields of death thy presence sought,
Nor thinks the mighty prize too dearly bought!
On foreign mountains may the sun refine
The grape's soft juice, and mellow it to wine,
With citron groves adorn a distant soil,
And the fat olive swell with floods of oil:
We envy not the warmer clime, that lies
In ten degrees of more indulgent skies,
Nor at the coarseness of our heaven repine,
Though o'er our heads the frozen Pleiads shine:
'*Tis* LIBERTY *that crowns Britannia's isle,*
And makes her barren rocks and her bleak mountains smile."

LONDON, JUNE 1, 1824.

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MEMOIRS,

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CHAPTER I.

VENICE.

Introduction.....General State of Italy under the Austrian Sway.....Unprincipled Transfer of Venice and Genoa..... Conduct of the English Government.....Destruction of the European Balance of Power.....Wise Policy of the Venetian Republic.....Propriety of restoring Venice and Genoa to their former Independence.....Necessity of a new Commercial Code.....Prohibitions at Venice against British Manufactures.....Their great Superiority.....Austrian Influence throughout Italy.

Of Italy I am about to write, and of the present condition of her government and people. And, when Italy is the theme, what lover of science and of genuine freedom will not accord me his patient attention? In this fairest portion of Europe—this cradle of the arts—this birth-place of historians, poets, painters, sculptors, orators, and musicians—fifteen millions of

fellow Christians, in an age calling itself liberal and enlightened, weighed down by burthens the most galling, oppressed by a series of measures as unaccountable as they are inimical to liberty and to happiness—are seen groaning under a load of wretchedness, as unparalleled in its extent, as it has been uncalled-for and unprovoked by the conduct of the unhappy sufferers! Deeds of cruelty the most wanton and unheard-of have been exercised towards them; while submission the most pliant, on the part of the forlorn victims, has but served to render still more obdurate the hearts of the civilized savages, who have taken upon themselves the task of governing this most beautiful, but ill-fated portion of the globe.

Unhappy Venice! thy melancholy fate might surely have drawn down upon thee the charity of the whole world! In any age but an age of selfishness and cold calculation, to have beheld thee alone, would have been sufficient to have called forth the indignation of mankind. But, unfortunately, thou hast partners in affliction, to divide with thee the compassions of philanthropy. And yet, the conjoint misery of the forlorn sisterhood of Italian States can neither elicit the justice of the governments of Europe, nor rouse into action the sympathy of surrounding nations!

Ye, who deprecate slavery in all its shapes and appearances—ye, who form yourselves into societies, to mitigate the condition of the sable African, and to abolish the traffic in the flesh of your fellow-creatures—turn, for a moment turn, your friendly attention towards the fettered Venetians! Hurried away, by the arch-drover Napoleon, to the European bazar, see them transferred to the yoke of Austria, and remorselessly consigned to the grasp of German rapacity! Next, behold the noble-minded Genoese, bound hand and foot, conveyed, in like manner, to the Anthropophagean Smithfield! Lulled into fatal security, see them manacled by those modern English politicans—whose misdeeds have roused into hatred of the British government the finest portion of Europe—and penned up for the loathsome and nefarious market; where a bargain has been struck with the Sardinian planters and Piedmontese rice-growers, and the poor Genoese, like their brethren in misfortune, the unhappy Venetians, have been harnessed to the yoke, and left to bewail their miserable condition, and expiate their past sins.

Shade of the renowned Columbus! could'st thou arise from the silent tomb,* and behold

* Christopher Columbus, the celebrated navigator, and discoverer

the land of thy birth betrayed into the hands of the enemy, by a commercial people, to what language would thy tongue give utterance? But, in this, as in all things, we discern the finger of that Providence, whose decrees are immutable, and the blind ignorance of frail and feeble mortals. Glad, indeed, should I be, could I honestly exonerate our rulers from the imputation of having assisted in the transfer of the Genoese to the yoke of their ancient foe and inveterate rival, the King of Sardinia; and happy shall I consider myself, if the earnestness of my language should tend, in however small a degree, to rouse them from the sullen lethargy into which they appear to have fallen, ever since the conclusion of the last peace, and induce them to turn their serious attention to the present alarming situation of the European dominions.

Up to that period, in what a different point of view was the Cabinet of St. James's considered by the people of the Continent! But, a fatal

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verer of the New World, was a native of the Republic of Genoa. He died at Valladolid, in 1506, and, by the direction of the King of Spain, was magnificently buried in the cathedral of Seville, and a tomb erected over him with this incription: "*A Castilia y a Leon nuevo mondo dio Colon*—Columbus has given a new world to Castile and Leon."

thirst for conquest has, alas! destroyed the happy harmony which once subsisted between the several powers of Europe. The transitions have been too vivid, the extremes too violent. Throughout, there has been an obvious absence of what political painters would call the *chiar' oscuro*, the due admixture of great with small states; the generous blending of minor with large powers, which is indispensable to the formation of that true equilibrium, which, for ages, had served as a city of refuge, and a tower of safety, to all and every member of the great European family, alike against external assailants and domestic traitors.

The first infractions of that admirable league are, most probably, to be looked for in the earlier encroachments upon the rights and liberties of the people of Poland—encroachments which, as the brave Kosciusko was accustomed to observe, spread with amazing effect their vulture wings, both in and beyond Europe; and gave rise to the loss of America, the invasion of the Netherlands, the French revolution, the revolution of Spanish America, of Spain herself, and of Portugal; together with the long list of fatal calamities with which the world has been afflicted, and those which may still await us; thereby awfully realizing the forebodings of

the immortal Pitt, when contending, not for a partial re-instatement of things, but for the *status quo*, whole and entire, unqualified and unbroken.

But, it is time for me to return to the Venetians. And, in earnestly recommending that wise and beneficent people to the fostering regard of Great Britain, I feel that I am only acquitting myself of a duty incumbent on every one who may have had the happiness of residing amongst, and of becoming intimately acquainted with them.

As a stupendous monument of human skill and industry, the city of Venice was calculated to have secured to herself the protection of the sovereigns of Europe. Rising out of the waves, like the Goddess of Smiles and Graces, and enriched with the gems of Orient, she dazzles the beholder; who involuntarily exclaims, "Surely a more appropriate symbol of commercial advantages can no where be found!" For centuries was Venice distinguished as the only maritime city in Europe, affording a shelter to vessels infected with the plague, even when driven away from other ports; and thus were mariners without number snatched from the jaws of death, and millions upon millions of property rescued from the watery deep.

True nobility of mind, when thus united to vast political advantages, forms assuredly that precise species of merit, which is the least questionable in the eyes of society. Indeed, the Venetian polity, as history amply bears testimony, was no less sagaciously calculated to neutralize the inroads of popular fury and revolutionary adventure, than the firm pediments and massy bulwarks of their city to withstand the ragings of the pitiless ocean. As, amidst the latter, her fair towers were seen rising in pride and glory, so were the interests of the Republic found flourishing with the former.

The melancholy fate of the unfortunate Venetians may, indeed, be placed on the list of parricides; a destiny which, alas, but too completely exalts Palma (who painted the day of judgment in their senate-house) to the rank of a prophet. But, what exposes still further this infatuation, on the part of the European powers, is the re-instatement of all the petty princes of Italy in their dominions; no portion of which dominions is of any importance to England, with the single exception of the port of Leghorn. In the name of common sense, then, why should Venice and Genoa, the staunch friends of England and of commerce, be singled out for destruction, and condemned to the most abject

thraldom; while Tuscany, Parma, Modena, Lucca, and other minor states, are left in peaceable possession of their former privileges, although of inferior importance, even when combined, to the Venetian territory alone?

It is therefore evident, I think, that Venice and Genoa should be restored to their former independent condition. In which event, they would become depositories for British manufactures, and promote their circulation throughout the surrounding districts, in preference to the manufactures of powers less mercantile, and therefore less able to afford them equal advantages.

But, at present, what is the condition of Italy? A total stagnation of commerce! general misery! And, with regard to the two great maritime cities in question, such has been the rapidity of their decline, that they are mere squalid skeletons of their former selves; presenting lamentable and striking instances of the instability of earthly grandeur. Splendid palaces falling into decay; magnificent temples deserted; and their once opulent inmates reduced to very poverty and rags, and wandering up and down, destitute even of the common necessaries of life! In fine, misery the most abject, ruin the most complete, is apparent on every side;

with the solitary exception of those dens of usury, the hideous tenants of which are seen battening in the midst of desolation and destruction.

In free ports, speculation proceeds with energy. In the event, therefore, of the Ligurian and Adriatic commonwealths resuming the attitude which they presented in the good old times alluded to in the British Parliament by Lord Grenville, the friend and colleague of Pitt, I would venture to propose Leghorn and Trieste, as fit models for imitation. Neither, unless, crouching as it were to Napoleon's plans for shutting us out of the Continent, we are afraid of extending our views beyond an intercourse with a few islands, can I see any reason why we should longer withhold our assistance to suffering humanity; or delay to extend, like wise politicians, our own inexhaustible resources.

To say the truth, the calamities which have been occasioned by war, can alone be completely repaired, by the introduction of a just and liberal commercial code, calculated for the whole of Europe; and, in the arrangement and settling of which code, Great Britain, wealthy and powerful as she is, ought to take a principal part. At present, the most shameful prohibitions are enforced at Venice, against all

merchandize coming from England. In such dread are these same manufactures of ours held by the German *impiegati*, that, at first sight, one would almost fancy them to be saturated with the elements of contagion. And, in a certain sense, they may, by comparison, be said to be so; for I am well convinced, that no manufactures, either for quality or price, can be brought into competition with those which this country is able to supply. Not a servant girl in England would put on the coarse dresses worn, during the morning, by the ladies throughout the German dominions. No wonder, then, that British goods should be excluded as much as possible. The old adage, that "comparisons are odious," is here completely applicable; for I can hardly name an article of manufacture to which what I have been urging does not apply. So decidedly superior are all the productions which we are in the habit of exporting.

Napoleon over-reached himself in many instances; but in none more completely than by the enactment of his famous decrees against British commerce. For, however much a war of a political character may be unpopular with the people of England, an appeal to arms in defence of their commerce, has uniformly been a favourite with them. The Corsican's man-

dates from Berlin and Milan were, therefore, in every point of view, injudicious.

Great indeed is the influence of Austria throughout Italy. Ever since the year 1815, that influence has been spreading with a fearful rapidity, which ought to have roused the attention of the reflecting portion of Europe. In addition to her dominions in Lombardy, with the exception of the poor Ionian Islands, she is in possession of the whole of the Venetian States, together with Istria and Dalmatia, countries which, time out of mind, have been the nurseries of the most skilful mariners, and the bravest soldiers in Europe; producing, too, such excellent timber for ship-building, and such capital masts, that Buonaparte directed a supply of them to be conveyed to Toulon, Brest, and the other sea-ports of France.

At the present moment, the two-headed eagle bears sway throughout the whole country, from the confines of Savoy, sweeping through the Neapolitan kingdom, back to the hereditary empire. However favourably the conduct of Austria may have been regarded by the unwary portion of the world, who, looking only at one head of the imperial bird, have permitted her progress without suspicion, her formidable alliance with Russia, Prussia, and all the German

States, with the exception of Bavaria, ought to rouse the jealousy of every one of the powers concerned. Without respect to persons, the designs of inordinate cupidity should be checked; the career of excessive encroachments should be arrested.

To advert, for a moment, to the invasion of Spain by France. With what grace can England interfere in behalf either of Spain or her colonies, if she refuse to assist in the rescue of Piedmont and Naples from the grasp of Austria? But, expediency is the politician's plea; and "expediency" is certainly a very imposing expression. It is irresistibly urgent; and every way competent, in its bearings on the stage of ambition, to make the actors oppose or submit, advance or recede, assist or abandon. It can palliate crimes, however atrocious. It can blur the virtue of heroes. It can on one day perpetrate deeds the most foul and ignominious; and, on another, perform achievements the most noble and praiseworthy.

Call upon politicians to perform their promises on the morrow,—and a future indefinite period is fixed on. Indeed, I may venture to say, from sad experience, that the moment of performance will never arrive. For, if they really intended to put their promises into execution,

hope, the medicine of the miserable, would not be uniformly administered; or, at all events, the accomplishment would follow close upon the heels of the promise. When, too, the service is actually rendered, it bears no proportion with the expectations raised, and will have resulted from intermediate causes, novel and unlooked-for at the time of the flattering proffer. Politicians delude but too frequently. The sweets of idle words are generally as fatal to the hungry expectant, as honey is to flies. But, besides this, there is a blunt and rude demeanour, which craft can assume—a vinegar calculated to render palatable the nauseous food—a sort of sham ignorance, a pretended want of experience, an affected aukwardness, the sharper in the peasant's frock, the hyena in the fable;—a mode of deception this, the most pernicious to the world at large.

CHAPTER II.

VENICE.

Transactions relating to Venice at Campo Formio.....Fall of the Venetian Republic.....Its Causes.....Buonaparte's burning Decrees against British Merchandize.....Consequences of the Prohibitory System.

While the Venetian noble Giusti, and the late Secretary Orazio Lavezzari, were engaged at Campo Formio, for the restoration of the affairs of the Venetian Republic, and during the residence of Grimani at Vienna as her accredited ambassador, under the sanction of Buonaparte, transactions involving her total ruin were in preparation. A variety of specious pretences, usual on such occasions, were resorted to, to gloss over and extenuate the disgraceful negociation. Amongst other things, it was intimated, that Austria was to give up Italy at the general peace; and especially, that the Venetian power was to be re-established. And, in this manner, through the mingled guile and ferocity exerted on the one hand, and the hardened inveteracy of a depraved appetite on the other, the venerable Venetian Republic

expired without a groan. A paralysis seized on the whole fabric of her government. No blood was shed, not a wound was inflicted, at her last struggle. The people and the senate were alike benumbed by the force of their terrors ; and, spaniel-like, they fawned at the feet of the Gallic tiger. It was a spectacle at once calculated to excite contempt and pity ; and strikingly evinced the close contiguity that sometimes exists between the two extremes. One tyrant, Attila, the foe to tranquillity and happiness, forced the ancient Heneti, or Veneti, to take refuge in the Lagunes : another tyrant, many centuries after, crushes them in his fiend-like embraces. Out of the sensation of alarm, the Venetian power first started; and, from a similar lapse into consternation, and a supine abandonment of the ordinary resources of a government, it at last fell.

Several individuals have, I am aware, been suspected of treachery; but, imputations of this kind will, I am confident, have no weight with persons accustomed to reflect, and to judge for themselves. Is it at all probable, that the Venetian Senate, whose boasted policy it uniformly was to invest no individual with extraordinary responsibility, would, at a crisis so momentous, deposit an extreme plenitude of power in the

hands of any particular delegate? That Buonaparte endeavoured to win over to his side some of the nobles is highly probable; but, that a single man among them was sincerely his friend, I can never believe. No, no! the excellent Venetians had no traitors among them, but sluggishness and moral prostration, at a period of considerable excitement in the world of intellect, and when the fires of revolution were blazing throughout Europe. Closing their eyes against the impending tempest—for a Venetian seldom looked into a book—they were at a loss how to act, when it at length reached their sea-girt city.

On the arrival of foreigners at Venice, a voluptuous train of diversions, unaccompanied with any remarkable tokens of manly energy, principally attracted their attention. Had a well-appointed army of brave and faithful Sclavonians—a race at all times strongly attached to the Republic—been kept up and occasionally reviewed; had but a small sprinkling of the martial elements obtained a footing amidst the Paphian amusements of the city, a far different fate would, in all probability, have befallen the Venetians.

Presaging, from the decrepitude of the Republic, and its sluggish aversion to every thing

military, the great Lord Chesterfield foretold, that they would one day become the easy prey of the first armed potentate who should think fit to attack them. When the French Revolution broke out, in so degraded a light was the military profession viewed by the Venetians, that "*Signor Ufficiale*," mister officer, was actually a term of reproach and utter contempt. At that period, a noble Venetian would no more think of sending, or of accepting a challenge, than a general would think of having a tilting bout with a subaltern, an admiral with one of his midshipmen, or a member of parliament with his own valet-de-chambre. If an English gentleman in a crowd had happened to jostle a Venetian Don, and a quarrel ensued, the latter, in answer to a challenge, would merely desire the former to go about his business, after calling him "*un' elefanto!*" At present, however, things are somewhat different; and well attested instances are not rare, in which the youthful descendants of the Venetian Peers have displayed a courage and a magnanimity of character, worthy of the best days of the Republic.

In all ages, the Venetians have been distinguished for an over-cautious policy—a quality which is necessarily unfriendly to the growth

of true courage. A governor of men may not inaptly be compared to a *palafreniere*, or groom of the stable. The over-cautious gentry of whom I am speaking resorted too much to ordinances, serving as curbs, snaffles, and bits, which deprived the noble animal of that due portion of mettle, which was actually necessary to render him useful, Not that I am, by any means, an advocate for that rude barbarism, which, after a short effort, sinks back into listlessness; but rather that Roman union of intellect with moral refinement and intrepidity.

As for the stigma cast on the Fine Arts, imputing to them a direct tendency to sensual irregularities, like many other subterfuges of depraved understandings, false in one instance, it is generally erroneous in every other. The subversion of kingdoms is occasioned by vice; and never by the introduction of the elegant arts, which uniformly tread in the footsteps of nature. No one, possessing a grain of common sense, can be made to believe, that political decline can be compatible with an approximation to Nature, every property of which is firm, continuous, and enduring;

> " Unerring Nature, still divinely bright,
> " One clear, unchang'd, and universal light !"

But, more of this hereafter.

Now, if we turn our view but a few years back, we shall find, that the mighty empire of Austria had so far dwindled before the arms of Napoleon, that Francis condescended to acknowledge that he held it in vassalage; thereby retrograding, as it were, at least seventy years. The Corsican compelled him to assume the title of Francis the First; a title which had been already borne by the husband of Maria Theresa, so far back as the year 1745. Although Buonaparte had made numerous Kings, whom he held in a state of abject subjection, Francis was his first Emperor; and the frail tenure of their power, and their tame submission to the fiat of the Gallic Chief, may be gathered from the far-famed decrees which he issued from Berlin and Milan, ordaining the destruction by fire of British merchandize, of whatever description, not only immediately throughout his own dominions, but, by implication, in every country dependent upon him. Like the Grand Signior, he had only to send about the silken cord—the Turk's hint; a sort of Irish insinuation, not easily to be misunderstood, and which was every where attended to. But, what was the ultimate effect of this measure? Why this: it inspired Great Britain with redoubled strength; and accordingly, unaided by the rest of Europe,

single-handed she overturned the plans which had been laid for her destruction; and, instead of sinking in the tremendous conflict, she overwhelmed her opponents, and rose, like another phœnix, out of the ashes.

So much for Buonaparte's burning system: the sole effect of which was, to kindle the fire of the British lion. Whenever the French ruler wished to draw money out of the pockets of his subjects—whose hatred of the English nation he always took especial care to excite—he had only to say that it was wanted for the purpose of attacking us, and the necessary supplies were immediately forthcoming. So great was the animosity against this country, which at that time rankled in the bosoms of our opposite neighbours! And, that animosity, I am sorry to say, still subsists: "*è cambiato il maestro di capella, ma la musica è sempre quella*,"—the ruler is changed, but the system continues the same. It was, however, the rock on which Napoleon's greatness at last foundered. To British perseverance, then, in the contest, do the monarchs of Europe, yclept "legitimate," owe, in no small degree, their salvation. And, what is the return they have made us? They have persevered in the prohibitory system, to the great injury of their own subjects. Instead of

conforming themselves to the obligations imposed on regular sovereigns, bound to consult wise counsellors and to adopt salutary laws, they have chosen to walk in the footsteps of a lawless military chief. An inconsistency this, which is past comprehension!

CHAPTER III.

VENICE.

Buonaparte's Plans for the Establishment of his Power.....His Vandalic Mutilations of Public Edifices at Venice, and elsewhere.....His Judicial Code.....And Schemes of Government.....His Conference, after the Battle of Austerlitz, with the Monarchs of Russia and Prussia.....Reflections on his Downfall.....Short-sighted Policy of the Holy Alliance, exemplified in their Conduct towards the People of Italy, and especially towards the Venetians.....A short Fable.

Had Buonaparte continued to reign, every vestige of popular commotion would have been obliterated, and every record of revolutionary tumult would have been destroyed. The prisons, of which the world has heard such shocking descriptions, no longer exist. Napoleon had determined never to enter the walls of the same dungeon, in which the unfortunate Louis and his

family had been incarcerated. The prison of the Temple, therefore, has disappeared from the face of the earth. At Lyons, too, the ruins occasioned by intestine war have been cleared away, and a magnificent square has been erected on the spot. Many other alterations took place under his direction; evidently for the purpose of obliterating the remembrance of popular devastations, committed during the levelling period which had so recently gone by. Nor are these traces of his ingenuity, as a despot of the most ambitious and selfish description, confined to France alone. Proofs of his determination to work an entire change in the face of things are even more striking in other countries. At Venice, for instance, he caused every symbol of the old *régime* to be effaced. The Winged Horse of that once famous Republic he ordered to be obliterated, however destructive such removal might be to architectural symmetry. Selfish and envious, he could not brook a competitor; and, wherever he found himself unable to equal or surpass some existing structure, in his headlong rage for singularity and fame, he would tarnish its lustre and deface its beauty.

To some of my readers these strictures may appear invidious. But, truth is the guide of my pen; and, to prove the correctness of my

position, I refer them to the once magnificent *Piazza di San Marco*, at Venice, which has been totally disfigured by the wing which Napoleon caused to be added thereto, during his occupancy of Italy, no doubt with the ostensible object of completing that square, and of thereby holding himself up as the projector and finisher of public works, which no mortal but himself was capable of setting about. Other instances of his pruriency for undertakings of this sort are to be found in the *Louvre*, and in the *Duomo*, or cathedral, of Milan. His completion, however, of the opposite wing of the former, and of the *façade* of the latter, afford but miserable specimens of the taste of the French Emperor; or rather, perhaps, the taste of his architect.

Buonaparte's Vandalic mutilations at Venice have been sadly repaid to his manes. Not a whit more of his marmorean—lignean—metallic, constructions, bearing his name, and titles, and personal emblems, are at this moment to be seen in any corner of his once boundless empire, than if "Napoleon le Grand" had never existed. *Sic transit gloria mundi!* What one man can raise up, another can pull down. God only is omnipotent, and His works eternal. The Romans, in the zenith of their glory, set about every public measure under the ægis of augury. At

least, they endeavoured, to the best of their abilities, to find out the exact moment and the precise manner of setting about the undertaking; and the surest test of their sincerity is perhaps to be found, in the success with which their exertions were usually crowned. We know they were occasionally cruel and unjust: but, in their general conduct and character, we discover a sincere reverence for the Gods. Of the grandeur, the correct judgment, and the pure taste of the ancient Romans, the best proofs extant, or those which at least are as good as any other, are the remains of their public edifices; their forms, the object with which they were erected, and the uses to which they were applied. Now, in the name of common sense, why place a triumphal arch, intended to resemble the memorials, always erected on the public ways, in honour of the Latin victors, in the centre of a square, and under which no one passes? And yet this blunder has Napoleon committed in the Place du Carousel. To build churches, raise palaces, and enact laws, are matters of no rare occurrence. In the construction of his code, he consulted every man, throughout his vast empire, pretending to the least smattering of jurisprudence. Those who happened to be fond of law, he was determined

to supply to their very hearts' content. But, if we may form an opinion from the results, no honours can be fairly awarded to the Gallic chief. Failing ultimately in all his projects, he has no claim, as an individual, to the extraordinary political sagacity which has been attributed to him, since his overthrow, by the very persons, probably, who were the most anxious to run down his talents while prosperity was every where the attendant of his career. As in his architectural undertakings he shewed himself a barbarian, so in his schemes of government was he equally unsuccessful. Religion, or the sincere humiliation of the soul before the Deity, was the subject which he appeared least of all to have understood. After this, that the Napoleon system of ethics should be held up as a model worthy of imitation, and that his policy should be considered the oracle for legislators, are among the most extraordinary signs of the present very extraordinary times!

After the battle of Austerlitz, a suspension of arms was agreed upon; and a conference was appointed to settle the preliminaries of peace, which immediately followed between the French Emperor and the monarchs of Russia and Prussia. It was agreed, that the place of meeting between the sovereigns should be a barge,

then lying in the river, at which the three monarchs were to arrive at one and the same time; not unlike the etiquette which was observed between Octavius, Lepidus, and Mark Antony, the execrable murderers of the immortal Cicero. Buonaparte was the first who entered the boat; but, the Emperor of Russia venturing to take the precedency of the Mameluke, the well-known constant attendant and *salva guardia* of Napoleon, the little man instantly turned round, and darted one of his Corsican looks at the Emperor of Russia and King of Prussia, intimating that it was his pleasure that this Asiatic slave should enter first. *Necessitas non habet legem.* There was no retreating. The Monarchs took the hint, and actually followed in the rear of the Mameluke!

For sovereigns who could thus sacrifice their private feelings to the good of their subjects, I am disposed to entertain all due respect; and I have only recorded the fact, for the sake of shewing the world to what a pitch of degradation these royal personages had arrived, previously to the conclusion of the wished-for peace. Where, then, is the man who must not rejoice at the downfall of a mountebank upstart, who could so far forget the respect which is ever due to fallen majesty, as to compel those

sovereigns to follow in the train of a contemptible slave? After this, what right had Buonaparte, when, in consequence of the battle of Waterloo, he was forced to surrender himself to the nation which he had so often stigmatized as a nest of pirates, to expect that any sympathy should be shown towards him? Truly, the meanness of this man in adversity, was only equalled by his unbounded arrogance in prosperity!

It has been asserted, by those who were in his immediate confidence, that when informed that it was Wellington who had for ever annihilated his power, and not Blucher—for whom he entertained a deadly hatred—tears involuntarily gushed from those eyes, which, unmoved, had beheld the massacre of the poor Venetians at Verona; the murder of Pichegru, D'Enghien, and Captain Wright; the arrest of the innocent * * *, who was obliged to flee to Malta; and the ruinous process against her husband, because she would not consent to become a spy upon England, her native country. Had he not been guilty of enormities like these, together with the treacherous sale of the Venetian Republic, at the very moment that his army was preserved form starvation by its government; and the barbarous murder, in cold blood, of the

Count Augustin Di Verita and others at Verona; he never would have been doomed, by a generous nation, to end his days on the barren rock of St. Helena.

True courage is ever magnanimous. In modern times, however, it is too much a mere word,—*vox et præterea nihil.* The brave man may be conquered, but he will never so far degrade himself as to kiss the feet of his conqueror. Galgacus was never more a prince—and a British prince, too—than when he was standing in chains before the Roman Emperor.

To return, however, to the Sovereigns. It is impossible to divest one's-self of the conviction, that it is to the timidity of their ministers, and not to the peril of enterprize – to their narrow-minded policy, and not to the extensiveness of their views—that we are to attribute the warlike aspect which Europe will most likely shortly be obliged to assume, from their neutral conduct towards the infidel oppressors of Greek civilization and of the Christian religion, as well as their unrighteous interference against the praiseworthy Spaniards; who, actuated by far different principles, have won over the majority of civilized nations to their interest. For the very subjects of those Sovereigns, who are now actually engaged in suppressing national liberty and in-

dependence, will themselves one day step forward, to assist in the general emancipation from human slavery.

At once ignorant, bigotted, feeble, and in continual dread of the natural progress of freedom, the mis-named Holy Alliance are combining—most un-holily and most sacrilegiously—to effect the overthrow of all liberal thinking. Impolitically fancying, that a state of freedom is incompatible with the safety of their thrones, they are for strangling the infant in its cradle; well aware that they would hereafter be obliged to crouch to its manhood. But liberty, like wisdom, proceeding from the head of the Thunderer, comes forth arrayed *cap à pied.* Her power is irresistible; her influence universal. Her voice, therefore, will be heard, and her dictates obeyed; when the short-sighted and narrow-minded mortals who would arraign her at the bar of despotic prejudices shall have sunk into oblivion, or be only recollected with sensations of pity and contempt.

The necessity which exists for a full participation in the enjoyment of that inestimable blessing, will strikingly appear, from a faithful detail of proceedings which have, from the foolish and mistaken policy of its several governments, been carrying on against the free-

born subjects of Italy, and, in particular, against the Venetians.

Her peculiar position, and fourteen years of uninterrupted experience, sufficiently shew, that Venice can alone be prosperous, under a government congenial to her soil and local situation. Nor can she prove of any, but of temporary and fleeting advantage, to the barbarism of the usurper, who would batten on the spoils of native genius, to the total extinguishment of the immortal motives, which gave birth to her primitive attachment to liberty and independence.

It is well known, that seeds which are prolific in one soil, often turn out unproductive when sown in another. So it is with governments. That which is best calculated for the happiness of one race of men, may prove altogether unfriendly to the well-being of another. The prosperity of a country may depend, as much on the disposition of its inhabitants, as on the wisdom of its laws; which must be adapted to the climate, the soil, and the general habits of the people who are to be governed by them. Now, the Venetians differ as widely in disposition, in manners, and in customs, from every other race of beings, as the element on which their city stands differs from the air. They may be compared to that sagacious creature, the

amphibious beaver. The policy which ever governed their intercourse with neighbouring and foreign nations, far exceeds the policy which generally actuates statesmen. Those who have had the opportunity of attentively observing, or inquiring into, the conduct of this very extraordinary people, will acknowledge that my description of them is not exaggerated, and proceeds from careful observation, during a long residence in the country, and from that free and unrestrained intercourse with every class of its inhabitants, from which alone genuine experience can be acquired.

In my humble opinion, the first considerations of a government bearing sway over a newly acquired territory, ought to be directed to the general character of its people, as well as to its soil, climate, and element; by an attention to which, much care and inconvenience would be avoided by its governors, and an incalculable degree of dissatisfaction and irritation would be spared to the people about to be governed.

Is there on earth a law which justifies, either the aggressions which have been made on Italian independence, with the connivance of the Holy Alliance, or the more recent conduct of France towards Spain? It requires neither the aid of a microscope, nor the wisdom of a Plato,

nor the sagacity of a British statesman of the old school, to discover, that when the Austrians crossed the Po, to take an unprincipled possession of Naples, they had, both in their rear and flank, their most powerful enemies; and that, had the Neapolitans been commanded by men, instead of automata, they would have given them sufficient occupation.

Genoa and Piedmont had declared themselves in favour of the same cause; and the Milanese only waited for a favourable movement, to join against the common enemy. If Austria had been so far worsted as to have been under the necessity of adding another to her numerous retrograde movements, the emancipation of Italy would have been ensured, and the total destruction of the invading army would have been the consequence.

As my work is of a miscellaneous description, that I may not fatigue the reader with too long a detail of the transactions which distinguish, as much as they disgrace, the nineteenth century, let me here withdraw his attention, for a moment, from the melancholy narrative, and introduce a short fable, which will be found extremely applicable to a certain event which has taken place in the American seas, at the instigation of one of the Northern powers; and the proceeding

which will, most probably, take place on the part of other branches of the Holy Alliance.

An old rat, who had long been on the watch for the unpacking of a case of provisions, which she intended to appropriate to her own use, summoned together a congress of voracious animals of her own kidney. Being assembled, she harangued them most philanthropically, and expressed her unbounded zeal for the general welfare. She solemnly assured them, that she entertained no selfish wish to participate in the common spoils, but was solely anxious to co-operate in bringing about such a reform as the times demanded; and that, such being the case, she should withdraw from the busy world, and claim no more, for her share, than what was barely necessary to supply the cravings of nature. Having concluded her harangue, she retired. One of the conclave, however, less credulous than the rest, followed on tip-toe the disinterested member of the long-tailed sisterhood; when, lo! instead of putting in practice her boasted moderation, she was found snugly nestled in the middle of a huge Westphalia ham! I leave my reader to draw his own inference; only observing, that Russian rats are reported to have an amazing attachment to Indian crackers; Austrian rats to Swiss gru-

yère; French rats to Parmasan; and English rats to *Stracchino—e questo è vero, perche* STRACCANO *tutto il mondo, prima di commminciare le loro operazioni.*

CHAPTER IV.

VENICE.

Oppressed Condition of the Venetians.....State of the Laws framed for them by Planzit, the soi-disant Solon.....The Criminal Courts.....Ignorance of the Judges.....The Civil Courts.....The Court of Appeal.....Delay of Justice..... Laws relating to Landlord and Tenant.....Austrian Mode of collecting the Revenue.....Severity of the Tax-gatherers .....Mode of farming the Taxes to Middle Men.....Depressed State of Agricultural Produce.....Debased Condition of the Currency.

To return to the present condition of Venice, and her miserable inhabitants. No people in Europe groan under a weightier load of oppression than the Venetians. The laws by which they are governed are little understood, either by Plenzit, the soi-disant Solon, who framed them, or by those whose duty it is to put them in execution. From the many contradictions with which they abound, and their innumerable violations of common law and common sense, I

have been informed, that the gentlemen of the bar, Germans as well as Italians, waited upon the great lawgiver previously to their being acted upon, and solicited of him, for their own guidance, an explanation of the numerous obscure and equivocal clauses in which they abounded. The only answer they could obtain from the modern Lycurgus was—"I have drawn up this code of laws. Apply but yourselves to the study of them, and their intent and meaning will become abundantly apparent."

This sagacious reply recals to my recollection a certain action, which was tried, some years ago, before the famous Lord Mansfield, respecting some cockets. These same cockets were found to be written in so miserable a hand, that his Lordship directed the writer of them to be sent for. When he appeared in court, the learned Judge asked him, whether he was actually the writer of these cockets? "Yes, please your Lordship," said the man. "Then," replied the Judge, "they are so illegible, that I have sent for you to explain them."—"I am aware of that," rejoined the scribe; "but I am only a *writer* of cockets, my Lord, not a *reader* of them." So, like this sagacious cocket-writer, has Plenzit left his laws unexplained and unintelligible—doubtless for the more speedy redress and con-

solation of the poor unfortunate Venetians, who are to be nurtured with the pith and marrow of these precious legislative enactments! This mutilator of the jurisprudence of the immortal Justinian has been heard to declare, that he could discover nothing in the Institutes of that great man in the least worthy of being retained.

This declaration of Mr. Solon Plenzit reminds me of those gothic barbarians of the present enlightened age, who modestly undertake to improve and render more perfect the writings of our divine Shakespeare; and who, the better to avoid a comparison of his immortal verses with their own vapid and disjointed trash, shrewdly take care, when they set about metamorphosing one of his matchless plays into a senseless and despicable opera, to expunge the entire of the original. I have often wondered, that these impudent transformers of sterling comedies into miserable burlettas, should never, in their "sway of vanity," have fancied themselves qualified to fill the *rôle* allotted to the *primo buffo*.

In Venice, and throughout the Venetian States, all criminal proceedings are entirely carried on in writing: so that a man may be accused, tried, condemned, and even executed,

without ever beholding the face of his judge, or being confronted with his accusers. Many of these judges are totally ignorant, not merely of the jurisprudence, but even of the language of Italy; it being the practice at Vienna, when any one of the clod-hopping gentry from the Tyrole happens to come to the capital and be out of employ, though he may even have been a cobler, to transform him, *presto*, into a judge, and dispatch him, in that capacity, to Venice. If, perchance, the man happens to be honest, his appearance belies his character: for he has more the semblance of a culprit than the president of a court of judicature. This, however, is a misfortune, and not a crime; and is, besides, of no great consequence; seeing that these Austrian dispensers of the law, like those of the Areopagus at Athens, never behold the object of their deliberations.*

* In the early days of the Grecian Republic, the character of its inhabitants was so strictly moral, that when the vices of a malefactor became publicly exposed, he showed such a sense of his past errors, as to excite the compassion of the judges to such a degree, as often to defeat the ends of justice. In order to prevent this, when the increased riches and population of the Republic increased the number of crimes, it was decreed, that in all criminal trials, a curtain should be drawn to separate the one from the other. The custom existed in Athens in the time of Demosthenes.

The civil proceedings in the Venetian States are now superintended by a president of the tribunal, who has eight magistrates under his direction. The cases are all forwarded to him; and it is his duty to distribute them to these different judges, who are bound never to decide on any case, unless five out of the eight should be present: the number, however, very often does not extend beyond three. These men act in the treble capacity of advocate, judge, and juror. No counsel are permitted to argue the case *pro* or *con;* and the mischief is, that these judges often come into court without having made themselves acquainted with their briefs. Many of them, as I before hinted, are actually Germans, Hungarians, or Bohemians, who have been sent to the Venetian States, entirely ignorant of the language, manners, and customs of the people, amongst whom it is their duty faithfully to dispense law and justice. Dispatch of business depends, therefore, more on the appetites of these gentry, than on their industry or sense of duty: for the reader will agree with me, that it would be most unreasonable to expect, that a German Judge should forego his dinner, for the sake of a paltry Italian law-suit!

There is, it is true, a Court of Appeal, as it is called. But then, this court is too polite and

too well-bred to disturb a former decision; and therefore it makes an uniform practice never to impugn, but invariably to confirm, all previous judgments—unless, indeed, certain *weighty* arguments should induce them to interpose!

The wealthy client has it constantly in his power to induce his judges to hasten or procrastinate their decision, according to the quantity and quality of the metal which is thrown into the scale, for the purpose of counteracting the workings of conscience, and securing a favourable verdict: it being a well established fact, that *solid* reasons of this description have never been adduced, without operating the desired effect. And, certainly, when we consider how wretchedly these men are paid by the Austrian government—if we could possibly imagine an excuse for taking a bribe for the maladministration of justice, it would be in the case of these long-eared judges. But, besides this, the greatest abuses take place, from the length of time which is suffered to intervene between the sentence of the court and its final execution; by which delay, even this mockery and mere show of justice is defeated, from the opportunity of concealing, or of making away with his effects, which it affords to the fraudulent debtor.

By the laws of Austria, no landlord can turn

his tenants away from his estate, but by a three years' notice to quit, though those tenants may be in arrears to him for rent, and are known to be in the practice of embezzling the produce, to the injury, and even utter ruin of the proprietor; since, from the non-payment of his tenant, he is unable to make good his own taxes. The government, however, enforces immediate payment from the landlord, by selling his effects for about a third of their real value; though, by law, they ought not to be disposed of under less than two-thirds. But the time between the seizure and the actual sale is extremely short. The greedy speculator on human misery takes, therefore, every advantage; whilst the agents of government, anxious to transmit to the Austrian treasury all the revenue they can possibly collect, sell the property for whatever it will fetch, rather than retain it; lest a fall in the price of the produce should render it still less valuable. In this way have thousands of the best patrician families, as well as many of the most respectable private citizens of Venice, been utterly ruined; though some of them have actually been, at the time, creditors of the Austrian government to a considerable amount, for arrears of principal and interest of money which they had lent to it!

When these distressing circumstances take place, the unhappy creditors apply, very naturally, to the government, for a liquidation of the debt due to them, to prevent the seizure and sacrifice of their property. In case the government should not be prepared to advance the whole, or any part of the money it had borrowed, they at least implore it to strike a balance. To which the humble supplicant receives the consoling answer—*solve aut arepit!*

Under the Austrian sway at Venice, the public taxes are usually rented out by the government to a sort of middle men—a class of persons, destitute alike of character and of property; but who, from the enormous exactions which the government allows them to inflict on the unfortunate creatures, who, from the causes I have just mentioned, and the low price of agricultural produce, may not be prepared to make good their payments—are enabled to give extravagant premiums to individuals who happen to possess unincumbered landed property; which property, for these considerations, they pledge to the government, in the way of guarantee for the punctuality of these tax collectors.

As these villainous middle men are in the practice of holding out exorbitant premiums of

thirty or forty per cent., many a credulous nobleman has fallen a victim to his own avarice, and has thereby lost the whole of his substance: for, at the expiration of eight days from the time fixed for the paying in of these taxes to the public treasury, the government seizes upon the estates of the unhappy guarantee, and disposes of them, without loss of time, to the best bidder.

Some of these tax-gatherers have taken to their heels, when they have found themselves unable to collect a sufficient sum, before the expiration of the two months allowed for the payments. Others have contrived to make good their engagements by the following device: the wretched farmers, and landed proprietors, when their estates are seized on for arrears of taxes, in order to obtain a suspension, or indulgence, for a short time, are glad to make great sacrifices to the local authorities, both in money and effects; besides giving their land and its produce, by way of security for the due fulfilment of the exorbitant engagement. This indulgence they are under the necessity of renewing every eight or ten days, making every time some fresh sacrifice. And, when at length these local authorities, who are in league with the tax-collectors, discover that they can no

longer spunge upon the unhappy victims of cupidity, they dispose of their effects at a mock auction, for a twelfth of their value—become themselves, under fictitious names, the actual purchasers—sell them again for their real value —fix the credulous proprietor with the guarantee to government—and, finally, decamp with the plunder!

When my reader considers, that agricultural produce does not at present fetch, throughout the Venetian States, more than a tenth part of its former price, he will at once see, that it is morally as well as physically impossible for the people to pay the present enormous amount of taxes. They are, nevertheless, now called upon, when the sack of corn of four bushels sells for only seven francs, to pay as much as they were called upon to pay when the same quantity sold for fifty francs. Every other commodity bears the same proportion: for, throughout Italy, corn is the standard by which the price of every article is regulated, and consequently rises or falls. But, though there is now this astonishing difference, the government has hitherto turned a deaf ear to the heart-rending complaints of its miserable subjects.

At Venice, the currency chiefly consists of a base metal, with which the government pays

both its civil and military servants: nevertheless, it will only take to the extent of a third part of the public taxes in this almost valueless coin; the other two-thirds it insists upon receiving in gold. And, as the revenue is collected every two months, genuine specie is become a regular article of speculation, and, at these stated periods, is with difficulty to be procured at any rate; for those who are employed in collecting the taxes, make a point of monopolizing, every two months, all the national money. Against this there is no remedy. The decrees of the government are rigidly enforced; and in case the good currency is not forthcoming, the defaulter has an additional five per cent. added to the two-thirds of the taxes which should have been paid in sterling gold.

This is the first instance, I believe, of any government depreciating its credit, by thus disgracefully refusing to take back its own debased circulating medium, in payment of taxes. Heaven grant it may be the last! for it is certainly a practice

"More honour'd in the breach, than in th' observance."

CHAPTER V.

VENICE.

General Character of the Venetians.....Males.....Females..... State of Society.....Casinos.....Marriages.....Dress of the Nobles in the time of the Republic.....Gondolas..... Treatment of the Meretrices.....The Free-Masons' Lodge suppressed.

GENERALLY speaking, the Venetians are gentle, affable, polite, courteous, hospitable, and more civilized and better informed than the inhabitants of any other part of Italy. Their conversation is at once entertaining and instructive. The vast number of men of talent, in every art and science, to which the Republic has given birth, is a proof that its lakes are as abundant in genius, as they are fertile in the productions of their native element. To mention only a few of the illustrious names who have rendered the Venetian nation immortal—Titus Livius, Petrarca, Trissino,* Algarotti, Goldoni, Titian,

* Voltaire acknowledges, that it was the perusal of the writings of this great Venetian dramatist, that first indueed him to set about the greater part of his theatrieal produetions; and especially his "Sofonisbe," which is little more than a eopy of the Italian, adapted to the French stage.

Tintoretto, Paul Veronese, Palladio, Sansovino, Scarlati, Buranello, Bertoni, Tartini, Canova, &c. are names which, in their respective departments, remain unrivalled, and will be the admiration of the world, as long as mankind shall continue to entertain a taste for science and the fine arts. As navigators, the Venetians claim the foremost rank; as warriors, they stand on an equality with the bravest; and as politicians, they are superior to every other civilized nation in Europe.

The men are above the middle stature, rather inclined to be tall, and remarkably well made. They have good clear complexions, fine expressive countenances, with an elegant and easy deportment. So remarkably constant are they in their attachments, that it is no uncommon thing to hear of friendships, between the sexes, of fifty and sixty years' standing. A Venetian rarely abandons the object of his primitive affection, except for ill-treatment or infidelity; and, even in those instances, he never fails to lend her his assistance, should she happen to stand in need of it.

The females, who, generally speaking, are handsome, have very fine figures, with beautifully clear skins, expressive features, and eyes that penetrate the inmost recesses of the soul.

They are interestingly delicate in their external manners and in their language; the Venetian being, of all the dialects of Italy, the most agreeable. In the mouth of a genteel *Donna Veneziana*, it adds to the native grace of her carriage, and never fails to charm and delight the ear of a stranger; especially when it happens to be placed in contrast with the vulgar Lombardian jargon. They are remarkably attentive to foreigners; though they rarely form a tender attachment for them. When, however, such an attachment does take place, it is usually most passionate and sincere.

The societies at Venice, whether at private houses or at the public casinos, are generally enlivened with the smiling eyes, and gentle and fascinating looks of the fair sex, and are conducted with an elegance and an ease superior to most other female societies; and without any of that discordant rivalship of prerogatives, too often to be met with elsewhere. The casinos are conducted much in the same manner as the subscription houses in London; where the members are at liberty to do as they please; with this especial difference, that the ladies only are subscribers, the gentlemen being honorary members. Strangers of respectability, of both sexes, are readily admitted, and meet

with a polite and affable reception. The company are entertained with a concert, and treated with refreshments. Cards are introduced at the wish of any of the party ; and other amusements, except those of hazard. These casinos are furnished in the most costly and elegant style, and are brilliantly lighted up with thè beautiful wax candles for which Venice is so justly celebrated.

The regularity, the order, and the magnificence which prevail at these princely casinos, at once discover the ladies of Venice to be a superior race of beings to their neighbours of the Terra Firma. In their conversation they are lively and unaffected without levity, and communicative and affable without coquetry.

The uncommon share of freedom which these ladies enjoy, induces foreigners, who have but a superficial knowledge of them, to form an opinion of them very different from that which they really deserve. My observations, of course, apply solely to good society. The mixed classes of every country have their *chiaro scuro*. The Venetian ladies are extremely engaging in their manners ; and as to their dress, it may be called becoming rather than fashionable, and sets off their fine figures to the greatest advantage. It is not unusual for them to be married

to men whom they have never before seen, except through the grate of the convent in which they have been educated, and which they only quit to enter into the gay world, through the temple of Hymen—where Cupid rarely presides, beyond the honey-moon! And, to this very liberty, which they enjoy the moment they are married, is it to be ascribed, that they are usually not so capricious as the Italians of the south, who are more rigorously subjected to antiquated external formalities.

If the experience of twenty years, obtained by a residence amongst, and a constant intercourse with, the highest orders of society, can justify me in hazarding an opinion, I may venture to pronounce the ladies of Venice worthy of our best esteem. There is a wide difference between an easy, unrestrained carriage, and that looseness of conduct, which is but too apt to be confounded with it.

At one period, the Venetians were so suspicious of their wives and daughters, that they never allowed them to walk out; and, to prevent their doing so, they even obliged them to wear exceedingly high-heeled shoes, which, as it were, suspended the foot from the toe upwards, raising the other extremity nearly ten inches, and making it almost parallel with the

leg; in consequence of which, their feet became cramped like those of the Chinese. Some of these shoes I have often seen, in the palace of the truly estimable Madame Damula Pisani.

The usual dresses of the noble Venetians, in the time of the Republic, somewhat resembled the black gowns worn by our judges, having ermine on one side. The robes of ceremony were of crimson damask, very long; and they were habited in full-powdered wigs, like those worn by the gentlemen of the bar. This was the usual dress of the Doge; except on special occasions, when he wore one made of gold brocade, with a massy gold chain round his neck, and a coronet on his head of the same materials, over a wig and velvet cap.

The dress of the noble ladies was a rich black velvet, according to the season, a skirt with a long train, a coloured body and sleeves, and a black silk veil that covered the head and shoulders, was crossed on the neck and round the waist, and fell tastefully behind on the black skirt. It was generally trimmed with black lace, and was very becoming when properly put on. Under the veil they wore a skeleton wire shape, to keep it from falling on the face, which was called *vesta e sendal.* Foreigners generally adopted this dress on their arrival at

Venice: but few could put them on so tastily as the natives. I recollect that Madame Mara, when singing at Venice, always wore this dress during the morning; and she was accustomed to say, that she never pleased her auditors more than when she was thus attired.

In church, at mass, and at all public places, the ladies wore this dress. During the time of the Carnival, they could never go to the theatre or opera without the *tabbara e bauta:* which was a long cloak of black or coloured silk, with a black silk cap, and a laced trimming placed round, nearly a yard in length, which fell over the shoulders half way down their figures. Over their faces they wore a mask, and on their heads a man's three-cornered hat, ornamented with feathers and a cockade. But, the moment they reached their boxes, the cap and mask were taken off, until they left the opera; when they were immediately replaced, until they had passed to their gondolas.

This dress, together with the mask, were worn during Carnival time, the feast of the Ascension, and at some other public festivals; which, altogether, occupied nearly six months out of the twelve; and only at these seasons, and in this dress, were they permitted to hold converse with the *corps diplomatique* resident at Venice.

The gondolas were all painted black, and highly varnished. In the middle of this elegant little vessel is a cushioned bench, for two persons; and on each side there is another, sufficient to hold one person. The tilt, or awning, resembles a hearse, with windows and Venetian blinds. The outer part is covered with black cloth, trimmed with tassels; the inner with silk; and a curtain, of the same materials as the outside, serves as a door of entrance. The gondolas of the foreign ministers, and of other distinguished personages, had generally coloured silk curtains, by which they could always be distinguished from those of the Venetians.

After the conquest of the Greek Islands, Constantinople, Cyprus, Candia, and the Morea, by the Republic, from the vast influx of wealth and luxury, and the great increase of population from the Terra Firma, it became necessary, in order to preserve virtuous females from violence, to allot—in imitation of the ancient Romans—a certain retired part of the city, for the habitations of the improperly called *Meretrices:* and, to prevent those dreadful evils, for which two great cities were once destroyed by fire, the Senators would walk, in the public square of St. Mark, by the side of these necessary evils; who, at the approach of evening, were required

to exhibit themselves between two lighted candles, at the windows of their apartments. Under the present government, the frail sisterhood are licensed, and pay a regular tax; and are permitted to follow their profession—*pro bono publico*—wherever they think fit.

A considerable number of the casinos belong exclusively to the gentlemen. The principal ones are—Il casino dei Nobili, il casino dei Mercanti, il casino degl' Avocati, il casino dei Literati, il casino detto Cento, il casino dei Filosofi, il casino Filo-dramatico, il casino Euterpiano, il casino dei Vecchij, il casino Filarmonico, il casino dei Consoli, &c. The Freemason's Lodge has been put down, and all who were members thereof have been deprived of their employments, and declared incapable of holding any office under the Austrian government. Many a worthy man has, in this way, been deprived of his situation, without being guilty of any crime. Surely the punishment greatly exceeds the offence! But, the notions of princes and of individuals differ widely as to these matters. The former adduce the irresistible argument—*du plus fort:* the latter are consoled by the reflection, that there is a Prince of princes, and that the day of retribution, sooner or later, will assuredly arrive.

CHAPTER VI.

VENICE.

The Venetian Tribunals described.....The Gentlemen of the Bar.....Former Greatness of Venice.....Her present fallen condition.....Necessity of dividing Italy into separate Governments.....Appeal to England in behalf of Genoa and Venice.

If, under the Venetian code of legislation, justice, in some instances, happened not to be obtained, it certainly was not the fault either of the judges or of the tribunals; for every branch thereof was portioned out to different members, who occupied themselves with the civil and criminal departments, the local and external police, &c. All the tribunals, the upper as well as the lower, were exclusively presided over by the nobles, assisted in their jurisdictions by citizens who had been educated for the bar.

My reader may form some idea of the multiplicity of the tribunals at Venice, when I tell him that they exceeded those of Paris. First, there was the tribunal appointed to settle all disputes relating to matters of property, and to houses within the city and the neighbouring

islands. Secondly: there was the petty tribunal of the Procuratori, which decided on disputes relating to property in the Terra Firma, the guardianship of children, marriage contracts, &c. Thirdly: the tribunal which settled all differences subsisting between the inhabitants of Venice and foreigners. Fourthly: the tribunal for contested bills of exchange and promissory notes. Fifthly: the tribunal for deciding upon the value of household furniture, and overcharges. Sixthly: the tribunal whose duty it was to superintend the making and repairing of the streets. Seventhly: the *Pioveggi*, who revised contracts, and settled the rate of interest to be paid for money borrowed. Eighthly: the tribunal whose duty it was to appoint agents, previously to the seizure and sale of property, and empowering those agents to put in execution the sentences of the other tribunals. Ninthly: the tribunal for examining into the right of public officers to make seizures; for putting its seal on property adjudged to be sold or alienated; legacies and donations by persons dying intestate, &c. Tenthly: there were the *Prefetti degli Voti*, or tribunal for seeing into the due collection of the taxes, and the expenses of the several tribunals. The disputes that happened to arise between masters and servants, were confided to

separate officers and magistrates. I have entered into this detail, merely to justify what I have asserted, with respect to the multiplicity of the Venetian tribunals.

The Venetian dialect was the only language allowed to be used in all public pleadings, written or oral, whether carried on at the bar or in the senate, as well as in all affairs of state. The solicitors and counsel, as well as every individual in their employ, were citizens of Venice, and were held in consideration as men of a certain rank, in all the civilized cities of Europe; so that the profession formed a source of great wealth, to those who distinguished themselves, by devoting their talents to the service of the public. Many of these lawyers, and especially those who united the talent of public pleading to that of giving consultations in private, made immense fortunes, and died possessed of much personal as well as landed property.

In strength of argument, in skill, and in beauty of diction, these gentlemen were not inferior to the orators of antient Greece or Rome; and greatly superior, in point of eloquence, to those of any other country; more especially in their criminal pleadings, which took place in open court. The counsel for the Republic was always one of the *Avogadori*,

who opened the case against the person accused, and founded his accusations upon the facts proved. He was replied to by the counsel for the prisoner; and, whenever his circumstances did not enable him to retain counsel, some one was always found to defend him, from among the College of Advocates, supported by the Republic for that purpose.

It was usual to produce every thing relating to the circumstances of the trial in court—such as pistols, swords, and weapons of every description; and both the accuser and accused were accompanied to the court by their relatives and friends: a custom which also prevailed, in similar cases, in the antient tribunals of Greece and Rome.

If this popular mode of adjudging criminal matters has been abolished in many of the northern nations, it has principally arisen from the preponderance of ecclesiastical influence; seeing that canonical institutions, that is to say, those that were devised by the Popes for the Inquisition, were more familiar to the people, than any other legal mode of proceeding by the laity.

Two principal events deprived the Venetians of the vast commercial advantages, which, for centuries, they exclusively enjoyed, until they

became divided with other trading nations: first, the discovery of the Cape of Good Hope; and, secondly, the interdiction of the nobles, by the senate, from engaging in mercantile concerns. Until then, Venice possessed the trade of the Indies by Alexandria and the Red Sea, and was the *entrepôt* of all Europe and Asia. Their commercial contemporaries were the Pisanese and the Genoese; who supplied the world with all those articles of merchandize which have since been shared between England, Holland, France, and other nations. The commerce which they carried on was the more honourable, since it was conducted by the first nobles of the state, who were governed by the same generous and noble spirit that actuated the Republic, in their wars, their conquests, and their treaties.

"*Venezia la Ricca*," the once beautiful, opulent, and unrivalled Queen of the Sea, has, alas! long since been politically blotted, as a capital, out of the map of Europe, having been sacrificed to Austrian cupidity, by the perfidious policy of Buonaparte. That single act—that one atrocious deed—independently of the murder of the Duke D'Enghien, and of so many other crimes of the same stamp—was alone sufficient to have called down upon his head that Divine

vengeance, which never fails to overtake the miscreant who dares to contemn His sacred commands. And, what crime, I ask, can be more truly sacrilegious, than the treacherously betraying an unoffending, a confiding, and an unsuspecting people to bondage under a foreign yoke?

The Venetian states, with Istria, Dalmatia, and the Milanese, under the mock title of a separate kingdom, form the gigantic boundaries of Austrian direct preponderancy; independently of the influence which she indirectly assumes over the entire of Italy. There is not, in fact, a foot of land from Savoy, including Sardinia and Sicily, throughout this, the finest, the richest, the most populous and most civilized part of Europe, over which the Austrian does not possess either an immediate or a family interest—to the incalculable prejudice of the general commerce of the rest of Europe, now struggling for emancipation, and endeavouring to establish a just equalization.

To preserve such an equilibrium has, since the destruction of the Roman empire, been ever the policy of Europe; and the general safety requires, that Italy should be divided into twelve small states and governments. Of these separate governments, Venice and Genoa were

ever the most happy, and the most flourishing. And yet, there are mortals to be found, who have the effrontery to hold forth in praise of the new system of spoliation and aggrandizement! I, nevertheless, venture fearlessly to assert—and the assertion is the result of a many years' intercourse, in Italy, with men of sound judgment and great sagacity—that these short-sighted politicians will never behold the restoration of general tranquillity in Europe, unless Italy—if not united into a kingdom, like France, Spain, England, Portugal, and other nations—be again divided into separate governments, as it was before the breaking out of the French revolution.

I challenge the Sovereigns of Europe to shew any sufficient cause why nations, like individuals in a court of justice, should not be permitted to enforce the validity of their claim to independence. Can you, England, who so sensibly feel the blessings of that envied constitution, which secures to you your native rights, and the enjoyment of which rights you are generously endeavouring to extend even to the savage—can you, I ask, continue any longer insensible to the degraded situation, the intolerable sufferings, of the people of Genoa and Venice? If you did not betray them by the

false protestations of your commissioners, you at least flattered them with the hopes, that they should be restored to their lost liberty and independence. At any rate, your respectable military commanders not only declared that they were authorized to guarantee those invaluable blessings, but went so far as to promise the people, that they should be protected by the British, in the possession of their antient, or of any other form of government, which they might consider most conducive to their own happiness. *Mieux tard que jamais!* It is not yet too late. And, for the honour of my beloved England, I cannot help indulging a hope that, compromised as she thus is, in the eyes of all Europe, in the natural degradation that must ensue, from the continuance of the present system, she will no longer continue quiescent.

Let me also hope, as I before took occasion to observe, that our philanthropists will not confine themselves to the emancipation of the Blacks, but that they will lend their ready assistance in redeeming the five-and-twenty millions of White Christian slaves—Greeks and Italians—now groaning beneath the yoke of foreign oppression.

Before I quit this part of my subject, allow me to make one observation. Shakespeare has told us, that "sweet are the uses of adversity;"

and I believe it to be strictly true, that the school of affliction proves a school of wisdom, to all classes of human beings—princes and crowned heads excepted! For, it is a melancholy fact, that, notwithstanding the long exile of the Sovereigns of Italy, in islands comparatively rude and uncultivated, and notwithstanding their almost miraculous return to their own beautiful dominions, they have brought back with them the same prejudices, the same arbitrary notions, and the same religious bigotry, which formerly distinguished all their actions, and to which may alone be attributed the annihilation of their authority, and the present restless condition of their unhappy subjects.

CHAPTER VII.

VENICE.

Niggardly Conduct of the Austrian Authorities in Venice..... Treatment of the Family of Solari.....Anecdote of Murat .....The Venetian Bernabotti described.....Venetian Nobility.....Libro d'Oro.....Prerogatives of the Aristocracy .....The Quaranta.

The low, niggardly, base, and parsimonious conduct of the Austrian authorities in Italy, is

as disgraceful as it is incredible; as disgusting as it is injurious to their own interests. Whither is fled the noble spirit of Maria Theresa, of Joseph the Second, and of their truly great-minded and princely minister, Kaunitz? It is an easy matter to censure: I will, therefore, adduce facts, in proof of the truth of my assertion.

At the period when the mad-brained Murat invaded the north of Italy, the Marquis Pietro Solari, on his return from Rome with despatches for the Austrian Government, was waylaid by that sanguinary adventurer, and wantonly murdered between Ferrara and Rovigo, within a stone's throw of his brother Jerome's estate, merely to obtain possession of his despatches. The Marquis had been three-and-forty years in the service. Two of his brothers had fallen gloriously in the field of battle, under Joseph the Second and Leopold; and many other members of this antient and noble house—which dates its origin from the great families of Mala Testa, hundreds of years before Counts of Hopsburg, from whom the present imperial family descends, were heard of—for the space of four centuries had shewn their attachment to the House of Austria; and, for their signal achievements were raised, by Joseph the First, to the rank of his Austrian and German nobility,

and permitted to surmount their own arms with the imperial coronet. Yet, notwithstanding all these strong claims, such was the unparalleled avarice of the Austrian Government, and such its neglect of this loyal and meritorious family, that the perpetrators of this foul murder have never been brought to justice; although there is every reason to believe, that the postilion was accessary to the sanguinary deed.

The relatives of the noble victim, finding that no steps had been taken by the Government to bring the perpetrators of the murder to justice, applied personally to Vani, the head of the police at Venice; who gave them the following answer:—"Gentlemen, the government will not reward the *Sbirri* for the apprehension of assassins; and I myself am so wretchedly paid, that I cannot afford to do it at my own expense. Under the former government, if I happened to have occasion for twenty or thirty extra hands for an affair of importance, I was not only paid for it, but thanked for my zeal and activity; whereas, the present Government would not only refuse to defray the expenses, but dismiss me for having done my duty. Had this happened under our lost Republic, the perpetrators would have been brought to justice, and the family of the unfortunate nobleman

would have been rewarded for his long services, and their irreparable loss. But—*tempora mutantur!*"

Yes! the times are indeed changed. The conduct of the Venetian Republic was in truth paternal, magnanimous, and generous towards all its subjects—especially towards those engaged in its service, and towards its poor.

As I have had occasion to introduce the name of Murat, I will here state, that I have been credibly informed, by one of his nearest relations, that he never would have entertained the project of invading the north of Italy, or of making war against Austria, if he had not received the strongest assurances, that, the moment he took the field, he would have the assistance of Great Britain. It is, however, most probable, that his real motive, in making this move towards the north, proceeded solely from a desire of exciting the alarms of Austria for the safety of her own possessions in Italy, and thereby disabling her from assisting the Bourbons, in preventing Napoleon from recovering the diadem of France.

The much talked-of Venetian *Bernabotti*, who take their name from having once lived, from motives of frugality, in a remote quarter of the city, called San Barnaba, are the descen-

dants of some of the first inhabitants of the Adriatic islands. All of them are ancient patricians, who, from misfortunes and a train of unforeseen events, have been reduced to the lowest pitch of indigence. To prevent, however, their being driven to the dire necessity of begging in the public streets, or of being employed in menial occupations, which might reflect disgrace on the descendants of the founders of its liberty and independence, the Republic kindly thought fit to make ample provision, in their various religious and lay institutions, for their reception and decent support. The males, whose inclinations might not dispose them to follow a religious avocation, the moment they attained the age of five-and-twenty, were appointed to the Quaranta. But, the claim to this provision for the Bernabotti, like that for the knights of Malta, depended on purity of blood. If that blood chanced to be contaminated by an unfortunate crossing of breed, the odds ran hard against their being entitled thereto. As their very subsistence, therefore, was made to depend on legitimacy, they rarely disgraced their birth by a plebeian marriage; since, the provision was only bestowed on those, whose nativity and matrimonial unions were inscribed in the Golden Book, or register of nobility.

There were, however, several liberal professions, which intitled their followers to the rank of nobility. For instance: if the daughter of a professional man married a patrician, their offspring were inserted in the *Libro d'Oro*. If a patrician happened to unite himself to a plebeian, the females of that marriage, when wedded to a patrician, were allowed to take the rank of their husbands. The males were employed as secretaries, or as residents of the second order, at the different courts. This was the case with Alviso Quirini, brother to the well-known and beautiful Marina Benzoni; their father having been a patrician, and their mother a butcher's daughter. I am not here speaking of the Alviso Quirini, who was the last ambassador extraordinary to the French Directory; he, as well as his lady, being both *pure* patricians. This was the Alviso Quirini, who had the honour to be appointed, by the Austrian Government at Venice, to attend on her Royal Highness the Princess of Wales, the late Queen of England, during her residence in that city; and whose wife presented all the Venetian ladies, whom her Royal Highness condescended either to see, or be seen by.

The Government of Venice was in theory republican. Yet no citizen, however opulent,

could aspire to aristocratical prerogatives, unless he could prove, *de facto*, that neither himself nor his ancestors had been engaged in commercial transactions for the space of two centuries. And, so jealous were they of their ancient privileges, that they only issued letters patent for aggregating the nobility of the Terra Firma to their own aristocracy in times of necessity, and when they had occasion to raise large sums of money, for carrying on their wars against the Turks, and other barbarous nations. If the Republics of Venice and of Malta still existed, Christianity would not now have to mourn over the thousands of its followers, who have been cruelly massacred by those savage infidels!

The number of those who were aggregated* from the Terra Firma to the Venetian nobility was very limited. They were even ballotted for by the Senate. Many have been rejected, and have had their money returned to them. For the nobility of the Terra Firma were obliged to

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* Every family, or individual, so called up, was obliged, as a guarantee for the due maintenance of the new dignity, to lodge a hundred thousand ducats in the Bank of Venice. This sum was lost to the family of the Marchioness of Solari, seeing that there had been no fresh aggregation from the Terra Ferma between the time of the money being lodged and the downfall of the Republic.

undergo the same formalities as those of Venice; and, even when aggregated, it required a century or two, entirely to eradicate the prejudices existing between them and the old nobility. For instance, they could not belong to the Savio Consiglio di Dieci, or Council of Ten; they could not be of the Inquisitori di Stata; nor Doge; nor ambassadors extraordinary; nor Podesta of Venice, &c.

Under the old Venetian Republic, the tribunals were composed of one hundred and twenty members, called the *Quarantia;* out of whom, forty were chosen by ballot, to preside, both as judges and jurors, in all civil matters. They were divided as follows: 1. La Quarantia civil vecchia; 2. La Quarantia civil nuova; 3. La Quarantia della Terra Ferma.

The members were called Quaranta, because they belonged to the Quarantia. Every patrician was eligible to the situation, as soon as he had attained the age of five-and-twenty. They much resembled an English jury; only they held the office for life. They must have been men who had been regularly educated for the bar. They were not under the necessity of coming to an unanimous verdict, as is the case in British courts of justice; but decided by a majority of votes, entirely from the evidence

which had come out before them, while sitting in the character of judges. If, by chance, it came to be known, that any member of the Quarantia had given a legal opinion upon the case, previously to its coming before him in his judicial capacity, he was declared incapable of sitting upon that trial, and his place was filled by another.

As the members of the Quarantia were generally either men of small fortunes, or belonging to the order called Bernabotti, they each received an annual salary, out of the public purse, of a hundred and twenty golden ducats, called in the Venetian dialect *zecchini*, to distinguish them from the *ducato*, of which there are two sorts; one of silver, of the value of four French francs; the other a nominal money, like our pound sterling, called *ducato di Banco*, worth something less than three francs.

The Venetian Republic, during its beneficent and truly paternal sway, bestowed a pension on all the children of the Bernabotti, from their cradle upwards. That which, in other countries, is too often considered a misfortune, was, to the above-mentioned class, a source of comfort and of emolument. They therefore cheerfully obeyed, as early as nature would permit, the sacred injunction—"Increase and multiply!"

When Buonaparte flagitiously overturned the antient Venetian power, many of these unfortunate Bernabotti were deprived of the means of procuring a subsistence ; and, if some of their own countrymen had not generously stepped forward to relieve their immediate wants, they must inevitably have perished ; for their new masters quitted them, without making any other provision for them than two livres a day. This scanty pittance has, however, been deemed too large by their present rulers ; for, all those who have praise-worthily endeavoured to add to this wretched allowance by their own industry, and to gain a trifle by engaging themselves as clerks in mercantile houses, have actually been deprived of it, by a decree of his gracious Imperial Majesty, declaring all persons incapable of enjoying the luxury of this enormous pension, provided they happen to have any other means of procuring a subsistence for themselves and families.

As it is quite impossible to live on this pittance, many have actually chosen to trust to the chance of getting employment, and have preferred to renounce their claim altogether, rather than exclude themselves, by accepting it, from every prospect of bettering their deplorable condition.

CHAPTER VIII.

VENICE.

Austrian treatment of the Company of Venetian Couriers..... Conduct of Marshal Chatlaire and his horde of Croats, on the destruction of the Palazzo di Andrea Cornaro by fire. .....Austrian Mode of indemnifying the Sufferers thereby .....Stamped-paper Memorials to the Emperor.....Revenue derived therefrom.....Deplorable effects of the Austrian system of rule on the Arts and Sciences.....And on "La Bella Litteratura Italiana."

When the Venetian States were first honoured with a visit from the Emperor of Austria, his Majesty was pleased to designate the unprincipled acquisition as "the brightest jewel and most valuable gem" of his imperial diadem. When I have reflected on the treatment which Venice has met with at the hands of her new master, I have often wondered within myself, what his conduct towards her would have been, if, instead of being a "bright jewel," and a "most valuable gem," that royal personage had happened to consider her mere *French paste!*

This bombastic language wrought like a charm on the ears of the two and-thirty pro-

prietors of the General Post, who had been robbed of their property, and deprived of the exercise of their functions, by the Corsican freebooter. Accordingly, the Company of Venetian Couriers, as they are called, went up in a body, and presented to his Imperial Majesty a memorial, praying for the restitution of their property; and begging to be either replaced in the exercise of their dearly-purchased immunities, or to be paid the sum which, centuries before, the Republic had resolved on granting them, if it should ever come to the determination of making the post-office a public concern. To which memorial, the Emperor most feelingly replied, that "it was but fair and just that the Company should be indemnified, since the Government were then reaping the benefit of the concern; but, in consequence of the expensive wars which Austria had, for so many years, been compelled to carry on, the public treasury was at that time too much exhausted, to admit of any additional burthens; however, if the Venetian States were willing to submit to the levying of a tax for that purpose, the produce should be duly applied to the liquidation of their claim."

This proposition was accordingly made to the States, and was most patriotically acquiesced in;

but, when the Austrians were driven from those States by the French, they carried away with them the produce of the tax so levied, without paying the company a single ducat; and the debt remains unliquidated to the present hour, although many of those unfortunate couriers have had their lands and household goods seized on for a two months' arrear of the taxes. All the facts of this aggravating case have now stood on the Austrian official records for more than five-and-twenty years: yet, neither principal nor interest has to this day been paid to the distressed sufferers!

On the dissolution of the ancient Venetian Government, the magnificent palace of Andrea Cornaro became a receptacle for the effects of many of the nobles, who, on retiring from the capital, were not able to dispose of them. In this situation they remained, until the Austrian Government purchased the above-mentioned palace for public offices. Scarcely, however, had it been taken possession of, when, in consequence of the introduction of a number of German stoves, the palace caught fire, and the property of the unfortunate nobles, which had been therein deposited for nearly fifteen years, was totally destroyed.

Marshal Chatlaire, who was at that time the

military commander at Venice, and who had lived a great deal with the Turks, though a Frenchman by birth, conducted himself, on this distressing occasion, in a manner worthy of an infidel. In this instance, at least, the old English proverb, "Tell me your company, and I'll tell you what sort of a man you are," was completely verified; for he comported himself more like a barbarian than a Christian. Instead of calling out the firemen of the *Arsenale*—an active class of men, usually employed on such occasions—he directed five hundred of his horde of Croats to enter the palace; who either savagely destroyed, or carried off with them, whatever the flames—more merciful than themselves—had spared. They demolished immense pier glasses of great value; carrying off the fragments to their barracks, and making them serve in the place of razors to shave themselves with. They also took away numerous articles of expensive furniture belonging to the noble owner of the palace, and to others.

This truly distressing circumstance is generally supposed to have been occasioned by the maliciously over-heating of the stoves, which the Austrians introduce wherever they go, to the total destruction of some of the finest paintings and buildings in Venice; since they are

not at all calculated either for the edifices or the climate of Italy.

The effect produced by this fire on the minds of the people was so unfavourable to the Austrians, that it was thought advisable to dispatch to Vienna a detailed account of the misfortune which had befallen this new public office. His Imperial Majesty, ever tremblingly alive to the welfare of his liege subjects, graciously directed a decree to be issued and sent round to the magistrates of Venice, enjoining them to procure estimates, drawn up on stamped paper, of the amount of the loss sustained by every individual, and to transmit them forthwith to the Government at Vienna.

This step quieted the unfortunate sufferers for a time. However, after a lapse of nearly a twelvemonth, they received from the *Camera Aulica*, the very consolatory answer—that "no individual had a right to deposit property in any of the public offices;" though the Austrian Government, when it sent that answer, was well aware, that the property destroyed had been lodged in the palace fifteen years before it was purchased for a public office!

Hope, delusive meteor! what myriads hast thou misled and bewildered, by thy smiles and fascinating prospects! What loads of treasure

hast thou juggled out of the pockets of the rightful owners, and transferred to the bottomless coffers of the Austrian Exchequer! leaving the cajoled expectants to exclaim with Hastings—

> "O momentary grace of mortal men,
> Which we more hunt for than the grace of God!
> Who builds his hope in air of your fair looks,
> Lives like a drunken sailor on a mast;
> Ready, with every nod, to tumble down
> Into the fatal bowels of the deep."

Numerous are the decrees, of the above gracious description, which have been issued by the Austrian Government, to quiet the unwary Venetians, by the expectation of redress for their grievances, and indemnification for their losses. This trick is resorted to, from motives of the most far-fetched guile, in order to extract the last ducat from the pockets of these miserable victims to every species of human disaster. For, be it known to my readers, that, once a week, his "paternal" and Imperial Majesty receives at Vienna the humblest of his German subjects. They must, however, as a preparatory and indispensable step, be all of them furnished with a memorial, drawn up on *stamped* paper; for, without a memorial so drawn up, not a Jack of them can be admitted into the royal presence!

But, alas for the poor Venetians, whose territory his Imperial Majesty designates as the "brightest jewel" and the "most valuable gem" of his crown, they are not permitted to feast their longing eyes on the august countenance, unless when the Emperor graciously condescends to pay a visit to the city of desolation! Being generally interdicted from journeying to Vienna, they have no other mode of making known their grievances, but through the medium of stamped-paper memorials. No fewer than twelve thousand of these memorials, on subjects deeply affecting their well-being, have been returned to them, accompanied with a direct negative to their pressing solicitations.

Nay, to such a pitch is this system carried, that it is now become quite a common thing at Venice, when it is rumoured that any one, not in the secret, is about to send off a petition to Vienna, appealing against some act of injustice, to exclaim—"If you happen to have any money which you are desirous of flinging away, risk it in the lottery; for there, at least, you have one chance out of a thousand in your favour: but, if you send a memorial to Vienna, no benefit can possibly arise out of it—*except to the Austrian treasury!*"

And, that this covert sort of impost is a highly lucrative one, there can, I believe, be very little doubt; since his Imperial Majesty, once or twice in the space of every month, gives an audience, which lasts for six or eight hours, to persons of all ranks and descriptions, for the sole purpose of receiving these memorials. And, as they are generally returned, *by the post*, to the different petitioners, a fresh source of revenue presents itself to Austrian cupidity! But, why should I complain of all this? Are not the Venetians Italians? And, if the Germans generously condescend to leave them their eyes to weep with, would it not be ingratitude, "more hideous than the sea-monster," to complain?

Under the Venetian Government, and even under the yoke of Buonaparte, all persons known to be in slender circumstances were exempted, when they happened to have occasion to go to law, from the payment of certain stamp and register duties; and not unfrequently from the expence of counsel, and the charges for briefs and affidavits. The simplicity, too, of the law proceedings formerly, in comparison with those at present adopted, was, in the proportion of one to a hundred, more beneficial, both to plaintiff and defendant, than the complicated and confused forms introduced by the

Austrians. If properly followed up, a lawsuit, in the space of six weeks, might be carried through all its stages, up to its termination.

The Venetian laws were also distinguished for their clearness and simplicity. Neither has the eloquence of their public pleaders been exceeded by the orators of any other country whatever. Indeed, for the space of centuries, the excellence of the laws of Venice, and the fairness with which those laws were administered, occasioned the tribunals of that city to be held in such esteem throughout Italy, that persons from all parts were accustomed to send their differences to be decided by the Courts of Venice, in preference to those existing in any other parts of the kingdom.

But, all these great and glorious deeds of the olden time have vanished—never more to return! At Venice, the poor have now no protector to look up to, save Heaven! Under the iron gripe of Austria, the rising genius of her citizens is nipped in the bud. Men of talents are forbidden to exercise those talents, in the church, or at the bar;—at least, within the Venetian territories.

This barbarous policy operates most destructively; for it not only checks the progress of the arts and sciences, but arrests the march of

civilization. It also strikes at the very root and life-spring of "*la bella litteratura Italiana.*" The Venetians, therefore, as they value their own comfort, should imitate the conduct of the ancient Greeks; who, after the tyrant Sylla had overturned the tribunals at Athens, instituted academies, where the people were taught the art of forgetting what they had once acquired. Even the works of the great Metastasio—who wrote the chief part of his operas at Vienna, at the express command of her Imperial Majesty the Empress Maria Theresa, for the entertainment and instruction of her daughters, the Archduchesses, and which works the murdered Marie-Antoinette was so passionately fond of, that she had committed their principal beauties to memory—even these works, I say, are now amongst the list of *libri prohibiti*, in the Austrian dominions!

CHAPTER IX.

VENICE.

Preference given to Germans in all the Public Offices..... The Venetians not suffered to leave the City without Passports.....Destruction of the Palaces of the Nobles.....Confiscation and Sale of them to Jews for Arrears of Taxes .....Neglect of the Arts and Sciences.....Stagnation of Commerce.....Restrictions thereon.....Present State of the Arsenal.....Fettered Condition of the Press.

After the best consideration I have been able to give to the treatment which the people of Italy generally, and the Venetians in particular, have experienced at the hands of their task-masters, I cannot help saying, and I do not use the expression irreverently, that the latter, during a space of nearly two thousand years, are the only people who have followed the example of the Saviour of the world—who, when he received the sacrilegious slap, instead of resenting the foul insult, turned the other cheek to receive a repetition of the outrage. To nothing else can I compare the humiliating condition to which the noblest portion of God's creatures are now reduced! We are told, that men are

never taught wisdom so effectually as in the school of adversity. I believe the maxim to be a just one. It should however be borne in mind by their rulers, that the Venetians are men; and that, though they may hitherto have patiently submitted to the yoke of the oppressor, it does not necessarily follow, that they will for ever consent to remain in their present prostrate condition.

Every individual possessing a grain of proper feeling, is naturally actuated by the laudable desire of being useful to his country; and he expects to receive from his sovereign the reward of his exertions, instead of seeing that reward bestowed on a foreigner; more especially when that individual feels, that he is not only in every respect the equal of the intruder, but greatly his superior, both in ability and in local information.

No Venetian, however, is permitted to serve under the Austrian government, but as *un' Alunno*, and without pay. The Germans, nevertheless, are employed in all the departments of the state, both at Venice and in the Terra Firma, and receive regular salaries; although many of them, from their entire ignorance of the Italian language, are incapable of performing their duty towards either their sovereign or the public.

And, has a government thus unmindful of the sacred obligations which it owes to all its subjects, any right to expect from those subjects love and attachment in return? The Venetians, at present, are very little better than mere slaves attached to the soil. No one is allowed to be absent from his watery element on a visit to the Terra Firma, without first presenting himself before the police, and there making a full confession of "parentage and education, life, character and behaviour," prior to his obtaining a passport. Let the business be ever so urgent, and the journey be merely to Fusina or Mestre—the former town being three, and the latter five miles from the capital—a delay of some days intervenes before the trifling request is complied with; and even then it is only granted upon the responsibility of two respectable housekeepers, for the good conduct and safe return of the applicant.

Should the individual soliciting the passport happen to be a person of rank, the request must, in that case, be made to the Secretary of State at Vienna, whose more pressing engagements will probably prevent his sending an answer for five or six months; and, even then, it is not unfrequently in the negative. If in the affirmative, a deposit must be made, at the rate of a

zecchino per month, for the time of being absent, and a couple of ducats must in addition be paid for the passport.

It has been given out in this country, that his Imperial Majesty, from his "paternal" anxiety for the preservation of the magnificent monuments of art with which the city of Venice abounds, has interdicted the further demolition of those beautiful palaces, which can only be compared to a forest of rich marble, rising out of the briny ocean, by some such supernatural operation, as that which is narrated to have divided Sicily from Calabria, or formed the Pharos at Messina.

It is scarcely possible for a traveller to give a faithful description of a city, which differs from every known city, not only in Europe, but in the other quarters of the globe. The sight of the immense blocks of beautiful marble, which present themselves between the foundation piles, and the palaces reared upon them, has such an astounding effect upon the beholder, as almost to leave him in doubt whether marble, as well as the piscatory tribe, be not the native production of the watery element: for it appears impossible, that the vessels used in navigation at that remote period, should have been of sufficient dimensions to have conveyed those

massy blocks from Greece to their present station ; or that, when they had reached Venice, they could have been landed uninjured out of those vessels, but by the aid of the most skilful and most perfect machinery. The sums expended upon the hidden foundations of these noble palaces, are calculated to have greatly exceeded the cost of the visible parts of these splendid edifices.

His Imperial Majesty is a native of classical Florence, and may therefore naturally be presumed to be a patron of the fine arts. In consequence of the present system of government at Venice, many of the most distinguished patrician families having, from cruel necessity, been obliged to pull down a portion of these monuments of their former grandeur, to procure to themselves the means of a miserable subsistence in the country, which of course destroyed the uniformity of the city ; to prevent a repetition of the practice, a decree was issued from Vienna, forbidding the proprietors to deface or mulitate any of the palaces. But, in the teeth of its own decree, this most consistent as well as most "paternal" government, has not hesitated—oh, dire digrace! oh, unheard-of sacrilege!—to confiscate them for arrears of taxes, and to dispose of them to Jews, who

convert the classical remains into storehouses, after taking down the ornaments and selling the materials. So that the barbarous custom which the decree was intended to prevent, still continues unabated; for no one, now-a-days, would think of purchasing a Venetian palace, upon any other than the above Israelitish principle,—a practice this, which adds daily to the misery of this already too-much oppressed and worn-down people: for, under the hammer of the government auctioneer, a splendid palace is often knocked down for a mere song.

That many of the noble patrician families are reduced to the last stage of misery, is but too notorious. In proof of the distressing fact, I will only adduce the sudden death of poor Zorzi, the patrician, and husband of Marcellina Gondollmer, who was found dead near the Piazza di San Marco, from actual want of food and raiment! The above-mentioned lady accompanied Mr. Rose, in his travels through Italy, and came with him to this country. She has since returned, with her son, to her native land, where she is living comfortably upon a pension, which has been liberally settled upon her by our enlightened countryman.

The public taxes at Venice, as I have already observed, are collected, under the present au-

thorities, every two months : for the payment of which, a printed government receipt is given. Should, however, the tax-gatherer abscond, which is no uncommon case, the individual, notwithstanding his receipt, is compelled to pay them over again.

Commerce, navigation, agriculture, as well as all the useful arts and sciences, are now mere non-entities at Venice. The exorbitant excise and customs duties, together with other vexations, have deterred all merchant vessels from trading to that port, since it has been under the " paternal " government of Austria. I must, however, except a few boats bringing salt-fish, red herrings, and dried sprats. If, therefore, the poor forlorn Venetians stand in need of a barrel of coffee, or a hogshead of sugar, they must patiently wait, until they can procure it from Trieste, at second or third hand.

Though it is not uncommon for a vessel to reach Venice from the last-mentioned port, in the short space of eight hours; yet, from the numerous obstacles thrown in the way by the custom-house officers, it is at least as many days before it can be unloaded. The commercial regulations adopted by Austria have occasioned a decrease in the import and export

trade of Venice, to the extent of thirty thousand florins per month.

The commercial buildings and warehouses are actually become mere watch-boxes, and barracks for the men, who were once busily employed as porters, to load and unload the merchandize; but who are now chiefly occupied in guarding the bales for transit, or in preventing the hungry rats from gnawing the cordage and packing.

Such is the present degraded condition of the spot which, until the discovery of the Cape of Good Hope, was considered the first commercial city of the world!

So celebrated was once the Arsenal of Venice, that it was looked up to as a model for all the dock-yards and other naval establishments throughout Europe. Four-and-twenty ships of war were constantly kept in a state of readiness, either for the use of the republic, or the service of its allies. Thus were thousands upon thousands of skilful and industrious artificers, of every description connected with the maritime department, kept in constant employ, within the small circle of three miles. Trees in their unhewn shape, rough from the forests, entered the arsenal, and sailed out of it vessels completely equipped for service, and wanting nothing

but their warlike stores, such as cannon, balls, and powder; which were conveyed to them in small boats, to the mouth of the sea, called *il Lido*, at the distance of about three miles from Venice; since no vessel drawing more than seven feet water can approach nearer to the city. Over the gateway of the arsenal still stands the winged lion of St. Mark, guarded on either side by colossal lions, taken from the Piræus at Athens. Now, alas, this monument of Venetian skill, and industry, and enterprize, is little more than a receptacle for old lumber, and the choppings up of the logs and staves of decayed vessels for fuel!

To give my reader a correct notion of the amazing sapience of the Austrians in matters appertaining to commerce, I need only state, that on their first taking possession of this once flourishing port, the cockets which they calculated would serve them for six months were not more than sufficient for the demand of ten days—a circumstance which occasioned a total stagnation of trade, until a further supply could be procured from that *sanctum sanctorum* the Aulic Chamber at Vienna; as they are not suffered to be printed at Venice.

For a Venetian to go to Vienna to demand redress for any injury he may have sustained,

would be almost as difficult as it would be for a man to land in any part of Europe, after a voyage to Turkey, without previously performing quarantine. These "bright jewels," these "valuable gems" of Venetian subjects, as their "paternal" sovereign styles them, are preserved as carefully as diamonds in cotton. They are shut out from the capital of Austria; and the local governors have especial orders not to grant them passports for that purpose. Like crown jewels, they are only to be seen on extraordinary occasions. But then, their native lustre, however they may have been pent up in darkness, is found to outvie whatever is placed in competition with them; nor can even the iron hand of despotism tarnish their intrinsic brilliancy.

In the ears of those who do not intend a remedy, the vibration of the complaints of the injured must ever be discordant and unwelcome. The more remote, therefore, the sufferers are from the authors of their grievances, the less will "the worm of conscience begnaw their souls;" for, assuredly, the delicate nerves of exalted personages ought not to be deprived of their accustomed tension, on account of the miseries of a few thousand poverty-struck and half-starved human beings!

The Venetians are not even permitted to

reprint the newspaper published at Vienna, until it has been carefully examined by the officers of the police; who strike out whatever they may think fit, before they suffer it to be translated into the Italian language. Graziosi, the editor and proprietor of a journal, for not having conformed to this most degrading regulation, was arrested by the police, and threatened with fine, imprisonment, and the total suppression of his paper. In his defence he alleged, that "he had done nothing more than give a *verbatim* translation of the contents of the German journal, written under the immediate inspection of M. Pilato, the political secretary of Prince Metternich; and that he could not imagine that matters of a treasonable nature would find their way into a publication issuing from such a quarter." Notwithstanding which, he was severely reprimanded, and told, that "there was a wide difference between what ought to be allowed to the inhabitants of the capital of the empire, and what ought to be allowed to the natives of a conquered city of a petty province." The tame submission of the present race of Venetians, proves them to be subjects worthy of such a government. The same conduct is to this day rigorously observed. Not a newspaper do the police suffer to make its appearance, until they

have cut out and garbled whatever they may be anxious to keep from the eyes of the enslaved population!

CHAPTER X.

VENICE.

Overthrow of the Monastic Institutions at Venice.....Reduced Condition of their former Inmates.....Low State of the Ecclesiastical Establishments.....Religion of the Venetians .....A Visit to the Greek Church.....And to the Armenian .....The Inquisition.

Throughout the Venetian territories, as well as in every other part of Italy, the monks and nuns have fallen into the toils of the revolution. Not that I regret the overthrow of the monastic institutions; though I cannot but deprecate the treatment which some of the noble as well as most worthy members of these and of other peaceable establishments have met with.

These unfortunate beings, of both sexes, were exclusively natives of the Venetian territories. They were most exemplary in the performance of their moral and religious duties, and distinguished for their charity towards the poor of

their dependencies. If conduct so praiseworthy can weigh aught in their favour with the unprejudiced and the benevolent, I trust it will be my excuse for exposing to the world the harsh treatment which they have experienced under the rule of Austria. The greater part of them were the relatives of patrician families, who had been reduced to ruin by the overthrow of the Republic. They had been too delicately brought up to betake themselves to menial occupations; and many of them were too old to be made serviceable. Consequently, when they were driven from their convents, if there had not been some small allowance for their daily support, they must, in this, the eighteenth century of Christian civilization, have inevitably perished from hunger.

Oh! if our much-vaunted Philanthropic societies, and our Bible societies, and our Mendicity societies, and our societies for the Suppression of Vice, and the Abolition of Slavery, had but condescended to bestow an atom of their benevolence on these devoted victims of revolutionary principles, surely it would have been as honourable, and to the full as pleasing in the sight of God, as it was to assail the House of Commons with clamours for the Abolition of the Black Slave Trade!

In all governments there must exist a hierarch. Why, then, should the Lady Abbess, or *il padre Abate*, not be suffered to exercise the same prerogative over the menial servant of a convent, which the field-marshal exercises over the private soldier, or the bishop over the curate, and which, in fact, is exercised in every country, and distinguishes the dependant from the superior?

At Venice, however, the Lady Abbess and the kitchen-maid, the house-porter and the head of the convent, had alike the same scanty pension of a couple of Venetian livres; that is to say, about tenpence English money per day, allowed them to subsist upon; as if these unfortunate, and worn down, and decrepid creatures had no longer any claim on the common feelings of humanity! And, even this miserable sum, out of which they are to find themselves in food, and in clothes, and in habitation, is not paid to them, until six months after it becomes due: by which delay, the government not only saves something in the way of interest, but speculates on the chance of some of the poor creatures dying in the interim.

Nor are the tradespeople willing to give them the least credit; well knowing that the government, in case they should die within the six

months, would refuse to pay their debts, though those debts might have been contracted for the very necessaries of life. So that these miserable beings would literally be reduced to a state of starvation, were it not for the benevolence of a few of their old dependents and some charitable shop-keepers, who formerly served their convents, and who, from gratitude for past kindnesses, continue to supply them on trust for the articles they may stand in need of.

In all catholic countries, when any extraordinary national calamity befalls the people, the government generally give directions to the ecclesiastical authorities to order public prayers to be offered up to the Supreme Being, beseeching him to avert the impending danger. These religious ceremonies are performed with all that pomp and decorum, which is customary in that religion, when invoking the Almighty. The churches are brilliantly lighted up; and although, on these occasions, they are crowded to excess, there rarely happens the least disorder.

Although their ecclesiastics, under the Venetian Republic, possessed no absolute authority, as is the case in other states, yet they used to provide the means necessary on these solemn occasions; well knowing the liberal system of

the government, in all matters of public utility, and especially in matters appertaining to religion; and that it never took advantage of those who confided in its generosity. But, at present, this class, like the former inhabitants of the convents, are so shabbily rewarded for their services, that they are no longer in a condition to supply the church, even for its common necessaries, much less for extraordinary occasions.

The above ceremony usually commenced with the exhibition of the crucifix, surrounded by twenty-four wax torches. Under the plea of preserving good order, this ceremony, as well as the lighting up of the church, is not now suffered, without first sending to Vienna for permission. But, religious zeal can stomach no delay; and, to prevent the consequences likely to ensue from disappointment, the clergy of the Basilica of San Marco, the first cathedral in Christendom, have actually been under the necessity of parading the streets, going from house to house, and begging the shopkeepers of the Merceria, and all piously disposed persons, to contribute towards the expense of calling upon the Supreme Being to assist them in their affliction! But, what "affliction," on this side the grave, can equal that of living

under a government, which, though professing the same religion, nevertheless withholds from its subjects the means of appealing to their Creator, in the mode which that religion enjoins? For even this cannot be done, without the sanction of the Aulic Chamber at Vienna!

Of all human sufferings, none are probably so truly galling as those which rankle in the breast of a noble, intellectual being—an Italian, for instance, sincere, unsuspicious, complaisant, polite, and yielding—when he finds himself duped and betrayed by a brutal and ignorant clown, whose only talent consists in low roguery! How humiliating it must be for Venetians to lie at the pleasure (*mercy*, it were idle to say), and the policy of Germans, Englishmen can scarcely conceive. Thraldom, under the yoke of foreigners—and *such* foreigners!—is a condition unknown to Britons. Long may they continue to be thus ignorant! And long may they know how to appreciate the unrivalled blessings which they enjoy, under their ancient and invaluable system of government!

With respect to the religion of the Venetians, there can be no doubt that the worship of the Deity exists, in its full sense, in a city abounding in churches, rich in every description of sacred ornaments, parishes abundantly supplied

with clergy, and hospitals administering to the wants of, and serving as asylums for, suffering humanity. In conformity with the primitive spirit of their institution, the clergy are excluded from any interference in matters of government. The curates are elected by the people in their respective parishes.

The several religious ceremonies at Venice are conducted with as much pomp and show as in any other part of Italy; and with the utmost decency, order, and propriety. I have been informed, that at one of the ceremonies in St. Mark's Church, whilst all the senators, the Venetian nobility of both sexes, and an immense congregation, were on their knees at their devotions, an Englishman was observed standing: seeing this, one of the senators went up to him, and with great politeness informed him, it was necessary that he should comply with the usual custom. To which the Englishman answered, "that he did not believe in transubstantiation." "Nor I," replied the senator; "but, go down on your knees instantly, or walk out of the church."

All religions are tolerated at Venice. The inhabitants used to bury their dead under their churches, there being no other cemetery; but, since the revolution, it has been found necessary,

the better to avoid many inconveniencies, to inter the deceased in the different islands. The Jews, however, were always obliged to bury their relatives at Lido, three miles from the city.

The Greeks at Venice have an archbishop, who exercises all the episcopal functions of their religion. He has also a seminary for young men coming from Greece, or from the islands. The day on which I went to their mass the archbishop himself officiated. I happened accidentally to be seated near one of these youths, who informed me, that he was a native of the confines of Epirus in Thessaly, and lived in the district of the former residence of the Oracle of Dodona.

The Greek mass and ceremony differ much from the Latin. Every one, on entering the church, gives a slight inclination of the body, his face being towards the door of the sanctuary of the altar; which is the only one in the temple. At their entrance and arrival at the altar the audience make an immense number of signs of the cross, with the thumb against the forehead, then right and left, from one extremity to the other, retiring reverentially with a bend of the knee; advancing afterwards to the altar, and bowing, one after the other, with signs of the most fervent devotion.

The paintings which are hung on the walls conceal from the people and the choristers what is passing within the sanctuary. When it is lowered like a curtain, every one retires respectfully, and seats himself. The archbishop, on entering, attended by his seminary, goes through the same ceremony, before he puts on his episcopal robes to say mass; which is performed by the individuals of his suite. During the ceremony of mass, the sanctuary is closed, and is only opened at times for the orations to the people, whose voices accompany the benediction; and for the reception of the space that is consecrated for the choristers, and which is held in great respect. The rest of the ceremony consists of singing and prayer. The person who officiates is enclosed in the sanctuary. The prayer composed for St. John Chrysostom, the celebrated patriarch of Constantinople, is responded to by the people, with a fervour corresponding to the object; while the choristers chaunt, and the singing boys unite their voices with all their strength. The shutting up of the sanctuary, during the performance of the liturgy, surprised me the more, as I had been given to understand that the contrary was the practice in the primitive ages of the Greek church.

In the Armenian church there are two altars; the one shut up like that of the Greeks; the other placed in the middle of the church, for the private masses. At one of these I assisted one Sunday: it lasted seven hours, beginning early in the morning, and ending at mid-day. The ceremony, in which the people were allowed to take a part, consisted in a young lad putting on and taking off surpluses, and other ecclesiastical insignia, of different colours and shapes, at least twenty times; in lighting a wax torch, and anon extinguishing it; in pacing rapidly up and down the church, and then resting himself to take breath; and in placing his thumb or handkerchief on his nether lip. During this, the chaunting of the bishop was heard from the sanctuary; which was now and then opened, and again shut. The bishop was a very short man, with a most agreeable and intelligent countenance. His pontifical robes were magnificent: instead of a mitre, he wore a Swiss college black cap. In the middle of the mass which was going on in the sanctuary, one of the attendants commenced mass at the second altar, in rather a low tone of voice. There was, in his demeanour and different attitudes, while officiating at the altar, that unaffected ele-

gance of deportment, which painters denominate "the grand style." As he wore a long, thick, white beard, the appearance of this very extraordinary personage somewhat withdrew my attention from the old gossips by whom I was surrounded, and whose conversation entirely turned on the disputes and tittle-tattle of their respective families and friends. When the whole was over, I exclaimed from the bottom of my heart, *Te Deum laudamus!*

I have heard it said, that the Greeks and Armenians were under certain restrictions, with regard to the exercise of their religious worship. I know not what may have been the case elsewhere, but certainly there were none such at Venice, under the Republic; as they were only enjoined silence upon those articles which separated them from the Roman church. On the contrary, the Venetians were constantly restraining the Catholic clergy from practising sundry impositions.

The Inquisition was one of the greatest securities against the abuses of the clergy, more than of any other class of subjects. The people were often indebted for their lives and liberties to that much-talked-of and much abused tribunal; which never exercised its functions, but in the same way as the English House of Peers interposes its

power, between the crown and the people. It was a balance, which prevented the Venetian nobility from usurping undue authority, and kept the people in subjection to the laws of the state.

With regard to liberty of speech, no people on earth enjoyed a larger portion of it than the Venetians. Every coffee-house was a public place of debate. Even St. Mark's Square was often the resort, where the utterance given to political opinions would make the Procuratia resound with the arguments in favour of this state, and against the other state, during the wars that took place, and especially on the breaking out of the fatal French revolution.

I am not a Venetian; but a twenty years' intercourse with all ranks and classes of that interesting and much injured people, thus authorizes me to detail facts which have come within my own knowledge, and to assert boldly the honest truth, to the best of my recollection and ability.

CHAPTER XI.

VENICE.

Reflections on the Conduct pursued by Buonaparte towards the Italian States.....And on the Imitation of that Conduct by those who have succeeded him in the Usurpation of the Country.

I SHALL now offer a few observations and reflections on the conduct which has been pursued towards the Italian States, not only by Buonaparte, but by those who have succeeded him in the conquest and government of that ill-fated portion of Europe.

Attached as I passionately am to a country, so celebrated for its natural beauties and its clime, and so distinguished for centuries as the seat of arts and the sciences; and having, for a space of more than twenty mortal years, witnessed her misfortunes, and been, from a matrimonial alliance, a sharer therein, I cannot help entertaining the pleasing hope, that the day will arrive, when Italy, fair Italy, shall be liberated from her present enthralled condition. Possessing a thorough acquaintance with the

language of the country, and having lived on terms of the closest intimacy with many individuals who were both civilly and politically employed in its government, I have drawn my facts from authentic sources, and particularly that portion of them which relates to the conduct of Buonaparte towards the people of Italy.

I arrived in that beautiful kingdom at a period of life when the faculties of the mind were expanding themselves with the milk and honey of blooming youth—untainted by false impressions, unfettered by rank prejudices. The best days of my existence were passed under that happy sky. There were my limited talents cultivated; there were they flattered and admired; and the hospitality I so generously met with at the hands of the natives—by whom I was looked upon as their countrywoman—induced me to adopt the once happy soil as my second *patria*.

Circumstances connected with the troubles of the times afterwards compelled me to withdraw myself from the continent, and return to my native land. Experience has taught me, neither to court the smiles of the great, nor to fear their unmerited frowns. It has been my endeavour, throughout the following observations and reflections, to steer as clear from party prejucices, as it is possible for one to do, whose heart is

still bleeding from the effects of the envenomed shafts which family misfortunes have there implanted. I have ever loved my country, and revered the principles of her inimitable system of government; which, like her own sturdy oak, after enduring for centuries the "peltings of the pitiless storm," has grown up to maturity. I have ever mistrusted the mania of modern philosophers for violent changes, and their idle notions of human perfectibility; well convinced, that the tendency of their cold and selfish principles was to deluge Europe with blood, and to undermine the palladium of religion;—a general toleration of which is, in my mind, the first principle that unites civilized society, and the brightest ornament of the English Constitution.

From the influence of his revolutionary system upon all classes of mankind, Buonaparte has inflicted on Europe the deadly curse of an unsettled generation. In consequence of that fatal influence, I was necessitated to spend several years of my life away from my family, in different countries; where the sight of the misery to which the people were reduced, by that pernicious system, afforded me ample means of examining into those old grievances, which they had been induced to exchange for new

and uncertain advantages;—advantages never to be realized, and not for a moment to be put in competition with the blessings they had lost; namely, moral principle, integrity, tranquillity, confidence between man and man!

Such were the effects of Buonaparte's *systême égoïste!* Let me intreat some of the upper classes in this country steadily to bear in mind, that the French Revolution set out with a reform levelled at the property of individuals, and not against the above principles. Let them recollect that, in order to get possession of that property, hatred, malice, and every degree of wickedness, were lurking under the foul disguise, until the nefarious object had been accomplished. Who were the victims of private assassinations? who were massacred in the prisons? who were daily butchered at the public scaffolds?—the misguided nobility, persons of rank and fortune, rich and peaceable merchants, fathers of families, honest and quiet housekeepers!

The executions against the rebel mob only took place when Buonaparte had no further occasion for their services; and then, when they became clamorous for the blood-money, the promised reward of their services, they were put to death, from a fear that they might discover their employers. These are facts which

cannot be disputed, as they notoriously occurred wherever Buonaparte made his appearance with his army of regenerators; and such conduct on his part was the more unpardonable, as some of the best writers of France had been employed by the Corsican in composing, and in circulating all over Italy, works containing the soundest principles, and enforcing the strictest order and discipline.

"Les Italiens," says Madame de Stael, whom I had the honour to be intimately acquainted with, in the years 1791 and 1792, as well as with Monsieur and Madame Neckar; "les Italiens sont plus remarquables par ce qu'ils ont été, et par ce qu'ils pourront être, que par ce qu'ils sont maintenant." The sentiment is a correct one; but, Madame de Stael saw the Italians at a time when it was almost impossible to give a decided opinion respecting them; and, though I entertain the greatest respect for the talents of that extraordinary woman, as well as for her private virtues, I cannot help differing with her, as to the general character of that people, and of thinking them still capable of shewing themselves worthy descendants of the conquerors of the world.

Strike off the head of a man, and the body becomes a useless trunk. The head of the Italians, considered as a nation, has long since

been struck off by their foreign oppressors, who have most unwisely and impolitically kept them divided; and which state of division has ever had, and must continue to have, a decided influence on the moral energies of a great people.

If it be absolutely necessary to divide a nation, in consequence of that nation having become the mistress of the world, why was France, after the dethronement of Napoleon, left *in statu quo?*

The present race of Italians exhibit the distressing spectacle of a body of nineteen millions of men, wanting the energies of a head. Who have been their sovereigns? And, what have those sovereigns done for them, during the space of seven centuries? They have been schooling them in the lessons of the ancient Greek masters, who, after the execrable Sylla had destroyed Greece, taught the people to forget their past condition, instead of improving their morals, and enlarging their virtues.

Buonaparte divided the Italians still more than their preceding yoke-masters had done. Take a lion, or any other savage animal, draw his teeth, pare the nails of his paws, and the creature becomes tame as a lady's lap-dog. So it is at present with the Italians. Misery, and division upon division, have annihilated their

former *fierté* of character; and I am sorry to add, that the conduct observed towards them by the successor of the exile of St. Helena, is little calculated to better their condition!

Spell-bound by the rapid ascension of that ambitious rocket, hurled from the revolutionary mortar, the several cabinets of Europe, not excepting that of St. James, appear to have imagined, that an imitation, on their part, of the conduct of that Scourge of the Universe must inevitably be attended with success; provided they took care to avoid those fatal errors which occasioned his overthrow. I allude to such extravagant projects as the invasion of Spain and of Russia; and more especially the latter, at such an advanced period of the year.

What a puerile imbecility do notions like these betray! As if an Omnipotent Maker of the Universe had but one mode of inflicting punishment on man! As if tyranny, and fraud, and corruption, did not carry in their train the very elements of retributive justice!

Another striking proof, if any were wanted, of the general fatuity, is to be discovered in the rage for imitating Napoleon. For scarcely is there a private individual of any weight in society, who does not endeavour to inspire

those around him with a sort of respect, by casting over his own actions that sort of doubt and perplexity, which the French Emperor uniformly practised, allowing no one to guess what the resolves of the mighty man were to be!

How silly, and at the same time how knavish this kind of conduct often is! In deeds, perpetuating his evil spirit; in words, decrying and execrating his foul actions! With one hand, begriming and pulling down the heraldic insignia of his rule—with the other, dispersing and sending about his image in every direction: the coin in circulation throughout France and Italy still bearing his image and superscription: one day tearing to pieces and vilifying that, which, on the next, they uphold and extol to the very skies; reminding one of the eternal toil to which poets have condemned the wicked after death, for the crimes they were guilty of while living—

——— "*et Danai genus*
Infame, damnatusque longi
Sisyphus Æolides laboris."

CHAPTER XII.

VENICE.

The Subject continued.—Buonaparte considered as a General .....The Napoleon Military System described.....His Mode of treating the Soldiers.....Strict Discipline of his Armies .....Some of the leading Causes of his Overthrow pointed out.....Origin of Revolutions in a State.

Now that Napoleon is gone the way of all flesh, it is the fashion to eulogize and puff him off as a great man; and, if the attempted palliation were not intended as an apology for the adoption of his despotic measures, I should not be unwilling, to a certain extent, to join in the encomium.

As a general, in the hour of battle, he shewed himself a god of war—a very Mars. Possessing a consummate knowledge of the military science, he was, for quickness of intellect and promptitude of execution, altogether without a parallel.

But, the thing which stamped him a general of the first rate was his always commencing the battle, and striking the first blow. For while he thereby infused the confidence of hope into

his own troops, he generated the chill of despair into those of his adversary. He would not be dictated to by any mortal breathing. Accustomed, by superior skill, to baffle the plans of his adversary, he ever took the lead, and preserved it to the last; thereby striking terror and dismay into the bosoms of the stoutest. The carrying on of a defensive warfare he left for those feeble souls, who were either paralyzed through fear, cramped and fettered by responsibility, or ignorant of human nature.

And, did not Napoleon act wisely in so doing? Admitting the contending bodies to be of equal strength, is it not a fact, that the assailant is ever the most formidable? Let us suppose the field of battle to be a billiard table: does not the propelled ball drive on the other ball? In fact, so far from the resisting object having the advantage, it is not certain that it will ever have an opportunity of striking a single blow. The tactics of Hannibal were invariably those of assault. The wary Fabius has been lauded for his prudence, in standing upon the defensive; when, in fact, he had no other alternative, in the miserable, derelict extremities of Rome, whose numerous legions had been successively destroyed by the daring Carthaginian. The far-famed retreats of Moreau, and of other great

generals, not forgetting that of the Ten Thousand Greeks, are feats of war which we take no delight in extolling. When speaking of discord and its furies—of the crush of battle and the shock of arms—it is the Macedonian, it is the Roman, it is the French Emperor, whose dread achievements elicit our wonder and admiration. It is the progress of the conqueror that we applaud. Suppose a couple of gladiators engaged—the first lunge may disable the opponent for ever. In short, even in the brute creation, strength discovers itself in the same way; the more feeble of the two very rarely commencing the onset.

In a period of peace, indeed, the case is different. Then, the ministers of a country ought to be passive. To conquer the more surely, they ought to wait patiently; success being ever the object in view.

Though by no means convinced of their originality, I am, furthermore, willing to allow that some of Napoleon's projects were vast in the extreme, and that they were arranged with a profound knowledge of universal society. Egyptians and Italians, Jews and Gentiles, he alike took a part in their concerns. Germans and Spaniards, Turks and Russians, were chessmen, which he managed and moved to and fro

like another Philidor, rendering them subsidiary to his renown, and tributary to his army; which was composed of a portion of each. France he overawed by strangers, and all other nations by foreign bayonets. Lest effeminacy should creep in amongst them, his soldiers were never suffered to remain long in one place, but were marched to fresh quarters every three or four months: thus, flinging "resty sloth" to the dogs; and, by keeping up their natural buoyancy and activity of spirits, preparing them for that strict discipline so essentially necessary in the hour of battle.

Such men, in fact, were the veterans who perished in the snows of Russia. So accustomed were they implicitly to execute the orders of their General, that none of the troops belonging to the other sovereigns of Europe had been able to cope with them. Neither ought England to repine at this; since, in the plenitude of Napoleon's power, she achieved every thing that circumstances would admit of. Truly did that man exclaim, that to himself only was he indebted for his overthrow. Aye, and for all the disasters of the Russian expedition! Had he panted less for an individuality of authority: had he, both as a monarch and a captain, sought for exclusive supremacy with an ardour a little

more tempered: had he been willing to share but a small portion of his laurels with his companions in arms—Massena, Augereau, and the other mighty champions of democracy and of the French Republic, who had sprung up simultaneously with himself: had not the fumes of personal ambition, the venom of adulation, and the blandishments of vice, warped his talents and intoxicated his understanding: had not all these things taken place, a forest of heroes would, in defiance of the hyperborean blast, have grown up around his throne, and enabled him to laugh to scorn the combined efforts of his enemies.

Buonaparte was more dreaded by the generality of mankind than he was esteemed. This was abundantly shewn in the critical moment of his authority. Had he practised less cunning and low shuffle, he would have shewn himself a better politician. "Aye, to be sure," have exclaimed some, "the unfortunate always commit errors!" Although the sentiment is sarcastically thrown out, it is nevertheless a just one. And, of all the crowned heads, Buonaparte was assuredly the most culpable: since, the man who had not been brought up from his youth in the trammels of royalty; who had had far better opportunities than the offspring of Kings, of

studying human nature, and of thereby avoiding its prejudices, ought, above all things, not to have forfeited the regard of the people, by the resumption of those most tyrannical and oppressive ordinances, to overturn which the French Revolution had exploded.

Reckless of the consequences, he studied too, in imitation of the other powers, to bring about a plethora in the body politic, by increasing, beyond all due proportion, the uppermost ranks of society. Now, whenever the vital sap ceases to flow in the minor and inferior vessels, a paralysis, or some other fatal crisis, necessarily ensues. When the subordinate parts become lifeless and parched up, the whole fabric soon totters before the blast, and the first hurricane levels it in the dust. When we shall see a wise limitation organized against every inordinate amplification of property, then, and not till then, shall I consider, that an advancement really and truly beneficial has been effected in the science of legislation; convinced, as I am, that the enormous disparity which exists between the property and possessions of mankind, is the great origin and well-spring of moral evil.

Not that I would, on any account, recommend a sudden revulsion. I would merely propose an amelioration, founded upon the immutable

dictates of nature. As for the convulsions and revolutions of society, who that has endeavoured to search after truth, in the depth of her recesses, does not know, that the very schemes which are planned for the prevention of those convulsions, invariably concoct and bring them to maturity? For, whenever a pressure becomes too excessive to be endured, the consequences, as we well know from fatal experience, are inevitable.

I do not say, as so many others have done, that "the people rebel." On the contrary, I assert, that there is no such thing as the spontaneous setting in motion of a mass so besotted as, time out of mind, "the people" have proved themselves to be. Those books of history, which tell us to the contrary, are the effusions of ignorance or of falsehood. Of course I am speaking of decided and downright revolutions; and which revolutions have invariably had their origin from some other quarter than that of the yawning and ignorant *canaglia*. An extreme cupidity at the fountain head of the Government—a sucking eagerness at the mouth, to the exhaustion of the other parts of the body—rapine on the part of pro-consuls at their distant seats of government, who, in the space of a few years, return to the mother-country,

not merely with their shattered fortunes repaired, but abounding in wealth—these, these are the things which bring ruin to an empire! Remote provinces have ever been the scenes of pillage and of malversation—even in the times of ancient Rome.

First came Asia. She was subdued by the force of arms. Her luxuries, together with her wealth, found their way into Italy. Circumstances again changed; and, after the accumulated treasures had, in the lapse of a few centuries, disappeared, the taste for Asiatic aromatics, drapery, and what not, rather increased than declined. So that subsequently, and after the chains of vassalage had been broken in Asia, its inhabitants continued to hold Rome tributary; and more than retrieved—more than avenged—their former misfortunes.—

> "*Nunc patimur longæ pacis mala: sævior armis*
> "*Luxuria incubuit, victumque ulciscitur orbem.*"
>
> "Now, all the evils of long peace are ours;
> "Luxury, more terrible than hostile powers,
> "Her baleful influence wide around has hurl'd,
> "And well aveng'd the subjugated world." *

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* Gifford's Juvenal.

CHAPTER XIII.

VENICE.

The Subject continued.....The Napoleon Military System of Government further inquired into.....Its Effects on the Customs and Habits of the French People.....Napoleon's deceitful and crafty Policy exposed.....His Surrender to the British.....And Death at St. Helena.

But, to bring my theory down to more modern times, and more recent vicissitudes.

Turning the cabinet into the camp, we find Napoleon studying political economy more like a General than a Sovereign. Trade he despised; commerce he crushed: while, on the other hand, he exacted enormous contributions for the support of his armies. If poverty be contemptible, he took the sure and certain way of rendering all those who were concerned in traffic, objects of thorough derision. And so far was his hatred towards England satiated; for he had certainly the satisfaction of seeing his followers regarding "*la nation boutiquière*" with actual scorn.

Now, in the then state of things, such a line of conduct was fraught with intolerable evils.

Had the military habits been free from licentiousness, then indeed would the degradation of commerce have been attended with consequences less fatal, than those in which he soon found himself involved. But, Napoleon was partial and unjust—a capricious upstart—in many instances, a tyrant—possessing less of the universal ken of the eagle, than of the limited vision of the hawk; more of the cunning of the lawyer, than of the sterling wisdom of the legislator; thereby proclaiming himself, as it were, the true son of the attorney of Ajaccio. Such was the fatal misprision of his system of civil government, that his whole kingdom, nay, all Europe, became a sort of general barrack, a garrison, a species of tented field, subject to martial regulations. The military mania spread far and wide; and thus were the locusts, the harpies, the sluggards, permitted to nestle and swarm amidst a miserable population, unable to resist their insufferable vexations, and incapable of appeasing their manifold cravings—whether of external vanity and parade, or of vitiated and depraved appetite.

Throughout France, every thing appeared to be done for the accommodation of the army. Her theatres, her public walks, her coffee-houses, her *restaurateurs*, and her gardens, all served as

so many focuses of recreation for the officers. Ask for a breakfast at a Paris hotel, and the waiter will fetch it for you from the neighbouring *café*. Indeed, there is hardly any such thing in France as an English fireside—a home! Strangers of moderate fortune, in passing through Paris, resort to coffee-houses and *traiteurs* for their meals; as they generally find it more comfortable to do so than to take them at their lodgings. Frenchmen, it is true, are fond of society to an extreme; great babblers; and more occupied with other people's concerns than with their own domestic affairs, which they leave almost entirely to the ladies.

This rage for gadding about, and gossipping, and making visits, is more or less prevalent all over the Continent; and by it the mental energies become greatly exhausted. Nor can I exonerate a considerable portion of my fair countrywomen from the like imputation.

Nay, the very trees and houses in France partake of the same gregarious character. In Burgundy, for instance, and in several other provinces, many a fertile spot is to be seen, upon which, for seven or eight miles together, not a rustic hut or shed is to be discovered, nor any signs of social life; although the deserted fields are abundant in the productions of Ceres and

Pomona; reminding one of those fairy tales, which describe the sudden appearance of sumptuous banquets magically raised, without the intervention of human agency, and only witnessed by the sweet warblers of the grove. In a moment, however, we arrive at some populous city; and, straight, the face of every thing becomes changed! As for the trees, we find them huddled together in clumps, in small woods, or, soldier-like, in rank and file, and in platoons. Geometrical figures, of all shapes and sizes, are rigidly adhered to, in the laying out of their groves and gardens, by the French planters of the leafy tribe. Nature, which ought "never to be forgot," is entirely lost sight of. All is formal—all is monotonous—all is stiff—

> "No pleasing intricacies intervene,
> "No artful wildness to perplex the scene;
> "Grove nods at grove, each alley has a brother,
> "And half the platform just reflects the other."

What shocked me most, under the Napoleon sway, was the intrusion of the soldiery, dressed in full uniform, up to the very altars of the churches: an impious, daring, and most odious custom this, which now, or at least very recently, was permitted by his Imperial Majesty of Austria. While every one is kneeling before the

image of God, and intent upon his worship, neither by genuflexion, nor by the taking off of caps, nor by any other outward signs of devotion, do the soldiery join in the ceremony! Some slight inclination of the body may possibly take place, on the elevation of the host; but that, I believe, is all. These irreverent practices were especially observed by the French, in the time of their Emperor; and the Germans, in Italy, have not been behind-hand in following the example; to the great scandal of true religion.

Why admit soldiers, or indeed any one, into their sanctuaries, who will not consent to adhere to the prescribed ritual? Surely no reasonable mortal can object to uncover his head, in a place consecrated to the worship of the Supreme Being, when the rest of the audience are all doing the same. As for the impious remark of intoxicated presumption, that soldiers should obey no orders but those of their General, and that the practice I am reprobating has been in vogue time immemorial, I need only refer to the natural disposition of the soul upon venturing into battle, and that involuntary recourse in spirit, to the God of Battles, which takes place during the existence of imminent danger, whether by sea or land. The most eminent of

heroes have, in all ages, discovered the profoundest reverence for the Deity; and, in proof of the correctness of my assertion, I could adduce recent instances, from the conduct of some of our own most distinguished naval and military commanders.

But to return to the views and projects of Napoleon. His eagle, as I before said, was a hawk. That Roman expansive ken, and that greatness of soul, which none of the other powers of Europe at all understood, the French failed to attain. The mind of their chief, cramped in a great degree by local admeasurements, and narrowed by constant calculations and the details of a field of battle, passed over other interests of paramount importance. All classes of the community were rendered subordinate to his troops; as if the profession of arms was alone deserving of notice—thereby proving himself to be a soldier, and little or nothing beyond it. Whatever his demonstrations to the contrary may have been, there can scarcely be a doubt, that his talents were chiefly confined to the science of war.

A sovereign should strive to be like the Almighty—wise, impartial, true, beneficent, and just. Now, without stopping to inquire in what degree the divine attributes here enumerated

were or were not discoverable in the actions of the individual in question, I shall, for the present, only advert to the third; namely, his love of *truth:* and although the *vox populi* is not in all instances the *vox Dei*—there being but a very slender portion of celestial intelligence shed over the minds of the multitude—yet, in the common opinion, which charges Buonaparte with a total indifference to this God-like quality, I in a great measure acquiesce. And his extraordinary abilities only serve to aggravate his guilt; since talent is the knowledge of truth, and a gift of God: consequently the suppression of the boon is a flying in the face of the Great Giver.

His deceitful and crafty policy—that evil spirit, whose deadly influence appears to pervade the great mass of society—low, and corrupt, and base, and wretched as it is, clung to him to the last. It is my conscientious conviction, that the sole drift of his outrageous hostility against Sir Hudson Lowe, the vigilant Governor of St. Helena, was to stir up a commotion in the island. Had he succeeded in gaining a free intercourse with the garrison, he would next have tampered with the officers.

Neither have I the charity to suppose that he would not have so far succeeded in seducing

some of them, as to have weakened, to a certain degree, their allegiance to their own Sovereign. Not that I entertain the least doubt of the fidelity of British officers. Nevertheless, in what way a constant intercourse at St. Helena with *such* a man as the tremendous Napoleon—a deposed Emperor too!—united to his consummate skill in fathoming character, might have operated on individuals of his own profession, it would be difficult to predict. Many a man has passed for a traitor, merely because he has been unable to refuse a solicited favour, to every appearance trivial, but in reality rendered very important from circumstances.

His hour was however come. The man who had entangled myriads in his snares—the man who had allured thousands by the melody of his promises—was at length caught in the very toils which he had himself invented. As the barbarous Muscovite learnt of Charles XII. of Sweden the mode of waging war, so were Napoleon's political tactics most sedulously studied, and most closely imitated. And, accordingly, he was at last taken by the same subtle and mellifluous contrivance of holiday promises. England was held up as the sole asylum for downcast sovereigns—the sanctuary of safety—the city of refuge—the harbour

of repose, and security, and freedom. Witness the Bourbons, and his own brother Lucien, and many others.

Napoleon, therefore, fearlessly ascended the Bellerophon. But it turned out a monster to devour him. It was no chimera! All, alas, was sad reality; both as it regarded the remainder of his brief existence, as well as its awfully instructive termination—

"*Mors sola fatetur,*
Quantula sint hominum corpuscula!"

CHAPTER XIV.

VENICE.

The Subject continued.....The Holy Alliance described..... Return to the Condition of Italy under the Austrian yoke .....Impracticability of assimilating the German and Italian character.

Having said thus much with regard to the policy of Napoleon, it will naturally be expected that I should next touch upon the conduct of those who have succeeded him in the government of the affairs of Europe. The reader must not, however, expect me to enter too minutely into a subject, which, at every turn, is

fraught with so much inconvenience,—disclaiming, as I do, certain personalities. Let the base reptiles remain in their lurking holes, for the present: only the ostensible personages shall be now noticed by me.

"The Holy Alliance!" How awful, how presumptuous, the appellation! Trenching closely on the attributes of Divinity itself; and thereby challenging inquiry, how far they deserve the assumed Vicegerency.

As far as my limited faculties enable me to form a judgment, the labours of this alliance have tended, hitherto, to rivet more closely the chains forged for the sufferers by their Corsican oppressor. The "holy" copartnership proclaim, that their prerogatives do not emanate from the people, but come down upon them, like the mantle of Elijah, from the Godhead itself! Good. And therefore am I the more completely justified in balancing against the divine attributes which they assume, the actual conduct of the several potentates who are parties to the said holy—most holy—alliance!

But, where should I find language sufficiently powerful to convey to my reader the actual result of such an inquiry? On one hand, the arrogance of the creature, and his feeble and imperfect and confined and variable notions of

things the most simple! On the other hand, the God of Nature, who—

> " Though chang'd in all, is still in all the same,
> Great in the earth as in th' ethereal frame;
> Warms in the sun, refreshes in the breeze,
> Glows in the stars, and blossoms in the trees;
> Lives through all life, extends through all extent;
> Spreads undivided, operates unspent;
> Breathes in our soul, informs our mortal part,
> As full, as perfect, in a hair as heart;
> As full, as perfect, in vile Man that mourns,
> As the rapt seraph that adores and burns;
> To Him no high, no low, no great, no small;
> He fills, he bounds, connects, and equals all."

These sublunary monarchs, with their hundred eyes, are incessantly on the watch, prying about, lest any of their bondsmen should escape their vigilance, and devising innumerable projects to shut out the rays of truth; whereas, the Almighty lives in light—

> " for God is light;
> And never but in unapproached light,
> Dwelt from eternity."

The most artful impediments have been thrown, by these monarchs, in the way of every individual who may, at any time, have been anxious to promote the genuine happiness of mankind. Every such individual has been

branded as a jacobin, a demagogue, a ruffian, a rebel. The foulest slanders have been heaped upon his head. He trembles at the atrocious injustice which he experiences at the hands of mortals who have usurped to themselves the characteristics of divinity; and, though feeling a consciousness of his ability to re-invigorate the fallen energies of his countrymen, and to restore to them the blessings which they have forfeited, as much by feebleness as by direct corruption—such a phalanx of demons uprear their furious crests in terrific array before him – such innumerable difficulties and dangers beset him in his path—that he stops short appalled; and, without giving a free utterance to his indignant feelings, he leaves it to God, in his own good time, to speed the righteous work, through the operation of his Almighty power.

After reflections like these, the mind involuntarily turns to the condition of Italy, as I have pourtrayed that condition in the early pages of this volume; and, if I were to confine myself to the present state of the Venetian territory, the observations which it would be my duty to make thereon would apply equally to the rest of the newly acquired German dominions. The same unfeeling schemes of plunder are every where pursued; many of them introduced by the

French, those ministers of rapine, and continued since their defeat, under various pretexts—exactions, grievous in point of substance, and galling beyond measure to the feelings; treachery; a false representation of things; expressions replete with the semblance of compassion, but, in reality, altogether hollow and delusive.

Instead of genuine sympathy, accompanied with positive redress, some new device is constantly resorted to, to increase the sufferings of the miserable Italians; absolutely forcing upon their memories the language of Scripture. The German tyrants seem to be aware that their power can be but of short duration; and therefore are they striving to make the most of it. Be that as it may, the wretched sufferers exclaim, that "Satan has overtaken them in great wrath." Venice, once the emporium of all Europe, is become a "waste howling wilderness."

The rapid disappearance, within the space of a few years, of the immense treasures of that city, announces an entire dislocation of society and a total defacement of her beautiful edifices, at no very distant period, if her present masters should persevere in the harsh and unfeeling conduct towards her, which they have hitherto adopted. It is unmanly and base, it is cruel and infamous, to trample thus on the prostrate

victim, reduced to the extreme of languor, by protracted and accumulated misfortunes. Let us, however, hope for better days; and that the sun of England's glory will, ere long, extend a portion of its generous rays to depressed Italy!

Indeed, I cannot help entertaining a belief, that the friends of suffering humanity will not relax an iota of their exertions, until the entire of that magnificent country shall have had its injuries redressed—a country, compared with which the much vaunted France is a mere warren, a cheerless desert, a bleak and hungry waste. Not that I mean to represent the latter kingdom as a barren wilderness, if duly cultivated: I only wish to throw out, that France, and, generally speaking, the soil of all the other countries of Europe, are sterile, when brought in competition with Venetian Lombardy, and other portions of the territory of the former Queen of the terraqueous globe. During the summer season, almost every tree in it is loaded with fruit of the most delicious quality. In despite of neglect, and of obstacles of all sorts, the earth teems with every blessing which Providence, in his bounty, has bestowed on his creatures; and that in such abundance, as to astonish every traveller coming from beyond the Alps.

But, "for whose use," I ask, is the sky of Italy so pure—its air so mild and serene—its earth so prolific? Hear the answer of Austria:

"'Tis for *mine*;
For me kind Nature wakes her genial pow'r,
Suckles each herb, and spreads out ev'ry flow'r;
Annual for me the grape, the rose, renew
The juice nectarious, and the balmy dew;
For me the mine a thousand treasures brings,
For me health gushes from a thousand springs;
Seas roll to waft me, suns to light me rise;
My footstool earth, my canopy the skies."

O, what delightful country seats could the English, with their excellent taste for laying out grounds, erect in Italy; where it is quite common to see bowers formed of the lime-tree and the vine, bending under a superabundant product! In proof of my assertion, I appeal to every one who has been fortunate enough to see the grounds of the English gentry settled in Italy; for instance, the gardens of my friend and countrywoman, the Countess de Durfort, who resides at a short distance from Venice.

And then, again, as to paintings and the other productions of the fine arts; more of them are to be met with in any one of the great cities of Italy—Rome, Florence, Venice, &c.,

than in all France—throwing Germany into the bargain!

To behold regions on every side thus rich and populous, groaning under a yoke forged for them by hordes of drowsy, lubberly Austrians, who come down in droves from the Tyrolean mountains, at all seasons of the year, with packs on their backs, containing scarcely a second garment, to the dismay of the poor Italian, who therein foresees, with renewed anguish, the augmentation of his own miseries, and the metamorphosis, in the space of two or three years, of these beggarly intruders, into stern, and hard-hearted, and wealthy proprietors—to behold, I say, this fine, intelligent people mixed up with the dull, clod-hopping Germans, reminds one of the amalgamation of lead with quicksilver; the jumbling together of masses the most heterogeneous. We often hear of the marriage of a beautiful and accomplished female to a clumsy boor or a drunken sot; and of the union of a man of sober disposition and enlightened understanding with a fiery virago, a very Zantippe, who stamps and storms about the house, while the worthy husband is calmly occupied in solving some difficult problem appertaining to the regions of intellect—recalling to our recollection the actual existence of the

iron age, and the wars of the Titans against heaven—the attempt, in short, to repress and subdue spirit by gross and inert matter.

Of the various nations of Europe, the Germans are the most doltish, the Italians the most sprightly; and the approximation of the two affords a fresh instance of the contact which frequently takes place between extremes. Such a state of things, however, is never lasting. Either an amelioration of condition, or an entire separation between the parties must take place. And, confident I am, that the very first Englishman who shall fly to the rescue of the fair dames of Italy, will find them impatient for flight, and eager to escape from the tobacco fumes, and the gin, and the *sauer kroute*, and the other German messes; not to mention the innumerable restraints, past all endurance, imposed on them by their detested paramours.

For my part, I am at all times inclined to trust very much to national character; and, as Englishmen are well known to be as prompt in lending their assistance to suffering humanity, as they are alive to the slightest rumour of delinquency, we may reasonably look for the beneficial interference of the British Government, as soon as it shall become truly instructed, with respect to the real condition of Italy, and

the miserable plight to which a horde of unrelenting tyrants have reduced her, by their unheard-of cruelties and their most atrocious exactions.

CHAPTER XV.

VENICE.

German Attempts to improve Italian Edifices.....Enumeration of the Distresses occasioned at Venice by the wretched state of the Coinage.

Only the other year all Venice was in a state of agitation, from the Austrians having taken it into their precious noddles to place the entire city on fresh legs. In other words, the wiseacres discovered, that some of the houses stood in need of new foundations. And, sure enough, the streets have assumed an appearance at once straight, formal, and monotonous—stiff as a file of musketeers, and (to give Old Nick his due) certainly somewhat more cleanly than they were accustomed to be. But, why these same external alterations should have been set on foot, while the means of replenishing the inside of the habitations were unfeelingly with-

held, is a point only to be cleared up by a reference to the uniform policy of Francis's predecessor; namely, the obliterating of ancient forms, and the thereby paving the way for impressions of a different description.

For such an undertaking, excuses would not of course be wanted. The leading one was, that the inhabitants were in constant danger of having their houses tumbled about their ears. We often see this propping and shoring work, on a small scale, going on in the purlieus of Covent Garden, and in sundry parts of our metropolis, where it has really been called for; but, in Venice, where the walls of the houses are extremely stout and substantial, and where no horses or waggons are moving to and fro to shake them, the undertaking alluded to only served to increase, if possible, the general odium in which the Germans were already held by the people of that city.

Whatever your barbarians cannot mend, they uniformly take especial care to mar. For instance, the public buildings which, in the glorious time of the Republic, were as free of access as the churches, or nearly so, are now closed against the people, and can only be visited through the medium of a fee. Admittance to the Ducal Palace, which is a suite of saloons, the walls

and ceilings of which still glow with the productions of Titian, Paulo Veronese, Tintoretto, and other inimitable masters, presenting a source of the purest delight to persons of taste and science, has been interdicted by these animals, who have no relish for these noble and sublime specimens of genius.

Talk of the Goths and the Vandals! their barbarism might perhaps have shewn itself in shapes of greater ferocity; but I verily believe, that their yoke was not accompanied with more direful consequences, than those which the German sway will ultimately produce throughout Italy. The "paternal" government of His Imperial Majesty is ostentatiously boasted of on every public occasion. His extreme solicitude, and that of the individuals employed under him, for the general good, is pompously trumpeted forth, whenever an opportunity presents itself; while facts, of the most damning description, give the lie to the averment. Nakedness, and poverty, and beggary, are hydras which might, at least, silence these unfeeling men. But no: the obstinacy of the dolts is proverbial, and the Italians in their employ (chiefly strangers to the city, or if born in it, persons of no character or note) acquiesce in all their measures. Indeed, the crafty Ger-

mans take care to give it out, that every one of the grievances which the people are made to endure, is not suggested by themselves, but is the work of some of their own countrymen.

I was myself informed by Count Thurn, the *Delegato*, or sub-governor of Venice, with an air of great regard for the person named, who the projector was of the recent repairs of the foundations above-mentioned. The name I have forgotten; but I could readily discover, that the object was to induce a belief, that neither the Count himself, nor any of his colleagues, had the least hand in the business. And, similar tricks are but too generally resorted to—the executive sending forth its mandates from a masked battery, which no mortal is permitted to explore.

At Venice, the people pronounce the governor to be in fault; the *canaille* cry out shame on the sovereign; while others, who affect to be more in the secret, impeach, by name, some two or three of the counsellors of state; who probably, after all, enjoy a smaller portion of influence than those who are kept more in the back-ground. Sometimes the civil, at others the military authorities are condemned; and, to wind up the "sad eventful history," the wretched citizens of Venice are heartily sick

of their numerous oppressors, and, in the bitterness of disappointment, wish both soldiers and sailors, commissaries and counsellors of state, aulic as well as hydraulic, who, one and all, strive only how they can best fleece them out of their last shilling—at the very devil.

By hook or by crook, however, an enormous revenue is collected by Austria in the Venetian territories. From Padua, a boat-load of money is every Saturday evening conveyed to Venice; whence it is forwarded, as may naturally be presumed, to Germany; since none of it ever finds its way back; and thus are the inhabitants drained to the last extreme of endurance!

Certain it is, that the Germans are held, throughout Italy, in greater dislike than the French ever were. The latter, though rapacious after money, spent it freely; whereas, the former are the most niggardly race of mortals on the face of the earth, and even grudge to lay out twopence for a cup of coffee. In fine, the whole body of the Government are indifferent to the happiness and well-being of the people, and are only solicitous to amass fortunes for themselves.

Some idea of the calamitous system pursued at Venice may be readily formed from the following well-attested facts, which relate only to

a solitary branch of the accursed tree, which seems destined to shroud in eternal night the renowned Venetian Commonwealth.

The regulations with regard to money—that *primum mobile* in the projects of political enonomists—bear with a distressing weight on the poor of Venice, and tend to keep alive incessant jars and wranglings between the shopkeepers and the inhabitants; to encourage fraud; to facilitate swindling; and to keep the city, from one end to the other, in a constant state of perplexity, irritation and confusion. Indeed, all the surrounding districts are alike a prey to the same diabolical contrivance—than which it would scarcely be possible to invent any thing more completely calculated to excite the furies of discord. And, alas! while the native gulls are whirled and tossed about in the common tempest, the master sharks are seen revelling in every species of wanton luxury!

If any superficial observer should be inclined to suppose the mischief venial, because it only alights on those whom he may be pleased to call the inferior classes of society, I do not envy that person either his head or his heart. To come, however, to the point: every city possesses its tribe of money-changers; but, in Venice the race is more numerous than in any

other; and the cause is to be found in the numerous abuses connived at, both there and in the surrounding districts. For a dollar of five franks—and little else but dollars of different mints are in circulation—no shopkeeper will give you small change, unless you will lay out a third of it in articles; since the small currency bears an agio of no less than nearly five farthings upon a Napoleon crown, worth four shillings and twopence. Either, therefore, three or four livres (I am speaking, of course, of the Venetian livre, in value fivepence) must be spent at a single shop, out of the five-frank piece, or recourse must be had to the money-changer; who charges you two and a-half per cent. for so doing, more or less, according to the state of the exchange, the quality of the coin, or his own good pleasure.

As for the vast diversity of coins in circulation at Venice, each bearing a separate value, one would think they were brought thither from every corner of the globe, in order still further to annoy and perplex the wretched inhabitants. The different kinds of German dollars would alone form a moderate-sized collection; and the sagacity of Midas himself would be puzzled to ascertain the intrinsic value of each. If, indeed, a plentiful supply of these

coins were seen flowing into the coffers of the Venetians, the mischief would comparatively be trifling; but the reverse of this happens, unfortunately, to be the case. Two prices therefore prevail, with reference to the small coin—the nominal, and the real; and the consequence is, that the poor man almost invariably hies with his dollar to the money-changer, since he is not able to expend three livres, nor even two, at a single shop; and it is not for the interest of the shopkeeper, on account of the said agio, to give change, unless goods to the amount of three livres should be purchased.

I have frequently seen a *Chevalier d'Industrie* call for his cup of coffee, which costs about twopence, and in payment thereof throw down a five-frank piece. The waiter, of course, cannot give change, as the loss by so doing would amount to more than the cost of the cup of coffee. Upon this, the *furbone*, after rapping out some half dozen score of oaths at the state of the money-market, repockets his crown-piece, and walks off without paying for his coffee. Others present a zecchino, worth above five-and-twenty livres; by which, however, the loss is not so great, since a couple of five-frank pieces and a livre or two, will about make up the sum. But the coffee-house keeper does not comply,

unless he happens to have Spanish, or some crowns of the same value, to give; having constantly an eye to the agio borne by the smaller coin.

Verily, all this is most distressing work! Fruit-stalls, and such like minor vents for commodities, present similar scenes of anxiety and irritation; and thus are places, which ought to be scenes of cheerfulness and of tranquillity, as was wont to be the case in the happy days of the Republic, converted into so many dens of harpies, feverish, wrathful, and miserable; and mainly through the pecuniary shackles of which I have been speaking. After the *emplette*, or bargain, has been struck, it is quite common, because the poor salesman cannot afford to give change, to see the articles flung back into the basket, to the loss of his custom, the damage of his wares, and his own bitter mortification!

From the above specimen, my reader will be able to form a pretty correct notion of what is called the Austrian government in Italy. If, in the agony of his spirit, the Venetian should venture upon a remonstrance, the only redress he obtains is some coarse German vulgarism; some common-place rebuke expressed in a tone of bluff asperity; some threat calculated to terrify him. Nor, indeed, is it to be expected

that those, whom the countless drubbings of the French have only served to render more proud and more brutal, should be troubled with any of the "compunctuous visitings" of nature. "Beat out one devil, and you let in ten," is an old saying, which may justly be applied to them. Invariably obstinate, the Germans maintain that they never were beaten by Napoleon; every untoward mischance they attribute to treachery. So true is it, that beings endowed with a certain crassitude of skull, cannot comprehend the power of intellect; nor how it comes to pass, that ability and skill can achieve certain deeds, and the operations of mind prevail over those of gross matter. Treachery may have done a little; but the reader may rest assured, that it was by talent and by spirit that the victory was achieved.

The expenses of the improvements which have recently taken place in the streets of Venice the proprietors of the houses have been compelled to defray. And thus has many a landlord forfeited his inheritance, together with the scanty annuity which he had saved out of the general wreck, and to which he looked up for his support in old age. Capital as well as interest, tenement as well as rent, have alike

been raked into the gulph of unbounded avarice; and thus has many an honest and humble individual been deprived of his last shilling!

CHAPTER XVI.

VENICE.

Reflections on Architecture generally.....Its Origin.....The Grecian Style.....Palmyra.....The Egyptian Column..... Necessity of a Petrific Standard of Antiquity.....St. Paul's Cathedral.....Of Cupolas.....State of Architecture in England compared with that of Italy.....The Palace of the Doge.

Every one who attempts to describe Italy, must necessarily speak of the magnificence of its buildings, and, *par conséquence*, of the beauty of its paintings, its sculpture, and its architecture. Those travellers, therefore, who slur over their account of the arts, which adorn and beautify at every step that classic ground, ought at once to confess their incompetency for the task, rather than plead as their excuse the "fine descriptions" which have already been published to the world by former visitors. These

descriptions may possibly be "fine:" but, for my part, I must ingenuously confess, that I have hitherto seen no luminous account, either of the paintings, the sculpture, or the architecture of Italy, from the pen of a *véritable homme de lettres*. Certain artists, possessing very clear ideas, are often incapable of committing those ideas to paper. And if, in the course of the observations I am about to make, some great names should be subjected to a scrutiny, which may appear to detract from a celebrity of many centuries' standing, I can only say, that, in the task I have undertaken, my only aim has been, faithfully to impress upon the minds of others, those sentiments which are deeply engraven on my own.

To begin with architecture. The first habitations for man must, like the dens of wild beasts, or the nests of birds, have been intended to serve for shelter from the wet, the cold, the wind, and from intense heat; as well as to guard against wolves, tigers, and other savage animals during the night. Let us imagine three or four trees growing close to each other: they might soon be formed into an enclosure, triangular or square, by means of sheets of basket or wicker-work, made of the boughs of the said trees. A roof or canopy would follow, con-

structed likewise of the produce of the forest, always adhering to the gifts of Providence; and, accordingly, the covering afforded by the oak and other trees would suggest the invention of different shapes, for a lid or dome to the new edifice, to preserve the area from becoming a swamp. The annual plumations of the feathery tribe, and the wool and hair of quadrupeds collected together, would be sufficient to insure a comfortable retreat to man in his savage state. When his views began to expand, he would then turn his thoughts towards the erection of some nobler fabric—a temple, perchance, for the worship of his God, or a dwelling for his chieftain. Ornaments, of a higher nature than any hitherto attempted would then be set about; and, step by step, the art would insensibly improve.

In the best era of architecture, security against the perils incidental to the convulsions of nature, whether by tempest or earthquake, was the primary object. Symmetry and ornament followed next in the train. In the first ages of society, temples were sought after by the people, as places of refuge in moments of peril, whether arising from war, from contagious diseases, or from the howling of the storm. And, in accordance with this principle, we trace

in the Egyptian, Assyrian, and other remains of the most remote antiquity, the features I have here traced. Trees were felled, and a portion of the trunks were fixed into the earth. They were thus arranged at equal distances, and upon their summits, coequal in height, and flat, were placed other masses of wood, made square, forming the architrave. That a pillar or column, tapering as it ascends, was fashioned originally from the shape of the shaft or body of a tree, is a position which, I believe, no one will be inclined to dispute. It is fluted or plain, foliated, and indented, obliquely or otherwise, according to the taste of the workman but, rotundity was always its leading form: to deviate therefrom was to shock and disgust; and it upholds those parts which project, such as vestibules, corridors, and passages for the people. The capital swells. So with trees: at the place where the main arms branch out from the trunk, the same would be found to be the case if a recision were made immediately over the said juncture—a triforked appearance, sufficient to justify the architect in transferring the practice from wood to more durable marble, by tumifying the pillar at the head or top. And, in giving to the plinth, or base, a rib, he is justified by a reference to the root of the tree, when

cleared of its ruggedness, and made smooth like a ring or hoop.

The Grecians appear to have established their theories respecting the column, upon this principle of nature; which principle, however, might long, very long before, have been in use by other nations. The Egyptians adopted a trunk in its original state, with scarcely any pedestal, the root of the tree being embosomed in the earth: a style of column which is eminently strong and lasting. The ornaments at the capital are light and playful, adhering in this also to nature: for there the leaves commence, and there would very probably remain a few sprays and some foliage at the summit of the trunk; a circumstance which, I have no doubt, gave rise to the carvings, which have subsequently been diversified, so as to include the plants or flowers growing in the vicinity, varied and modified according to the taste of the builder.

Again, if we take the appearance of a forest, the natural resort of certain animals in quest of food and repose, we find the lower branches in a perfectly horizontal position. A hint this, by which the early architects appear to have profited; their buildings having the appearance of so many groves: a repetition of the letter T., with at each end an I. And that this method

of building is best calculated for duration we readily discover, from the vetust remains still standing in the plains of Asia and Africa.

Cities acquire new names from the political caprice of the conqueror, or from some ridiculous lingual innovation. That Zenobia may have been a sovereign in the possession of some power, I am not disposed to deny; but as to that queen having been the founder of Palmyra, I cannot listen to the absurd conjecture: not that I entirely reject the accounts, which award her the merit of augmenting the splendour of that city. At what period Persepolis was built, and by what people, are facts of which we are entirely ignorant.

The Egyptian column is never, in the smallest degree, contracted at the base, like those of Greece, of Rome, and of modern Europe. The number of ages which have elapsed since the construction of some of the massy edifices to be found in that country, might probably have been guessed at, if, five hundred years ago, some petrific standard, exposed to the atmosphere, had been agreed upon, similar to the one adopted in the case of decayed monuments. From the results in the former instance, the pitch of remoteness might, with some degree of accuracy, have been guessed at, with respect to

the latter; about which such innumerable theories have been put forth, and all of them equally unworthy of credit. Neither vault, nor arch, nor dome, was admitted into their structures. The circle was to be found no where, but in the prop or pillar, and in their hieroglyphics.

The western front of St. Paul's Cathedral in London, is most unquestionably splendid, and, according to my taste, nearly perfect. The pillars which are seen supporting the dome are, however, inadmissible upon any established principle; unless we may consider them to be trees rooted midway up the mountain, and that cavities in the rocksw ere the primitive asylums of man.

Of cupolas—and I have seen every one worth looking at—that of the cathedral of which I have last been speaking is, to my taste, the most beautiful. The crying blunder however is, that the arched windows are made subordinate to the square ones; that airy lightness is placed beneath rectangular stability: for thus the principle of strength is violated. To range insulated columns, in situations where trunks of trees can by no possibility be made to grow, is an anomaly in architecture. Therefore the stout plank, or split pillar, with its foliated

capital should, as it appears to me, be exclusively appropriated to second or third tiers or stories; the curves to keep increasing even up to the circle, as the building ascends. And here again we have authority. The luminous orbs of heaven meet the sight when the eye looks up: and therefore, in architecture, ought the arch, the oval, and the sphere to find their stations aloft. The temple of Minerva at Athens, and other early magnificent erections, put the spectator in remembrance of a grove; a horizontal line is described by the termination of the leaves, while the bodies of the trees are the columns.

In England, the science of architecture is amazingly confined. The houses of private individuals are as painfully similar to each other, as if an immutable decree had regulated their figure and dimensions. A few lordly habitations are indeed exempt from this peculiarity: but, as for a noble, stately, hospitable-looking staircase, it is so rare a thing, that the owner of the mansion seems to have had no very strong inclination that any of his guests should, undirected, find their way through, or even into, the premises. In very few houses can the stairs be readily found. But the spirit for society in this country is very limited; and, to say the truth, not without reason; if we are to credit

the reports, as to the demoralized state of the mass of the population. Be this as it may, a secluded, domestic life is, after all, in times like the present, undoubtedly the best. But—do our English males, of the higher and the lower classes, live much in the bosoms of their families? I confess I should pause, before I ventured to answer in the affirmative.

On the contrary, in Italy, a noble staircase, and stately and spacious saloons, were indispensable features in the palace of every patrician—at least it was so in Venice; and this for pretty obvious reasons. The entire aristocracy amounted to about nine hundred or a thousand families; and, as they all became equal, from the moment their title deeds were enrolled in the *Libro d'Oro*, and were all liable to be appointed to high situations, it was imperative on each of them, when so appointed, to send round invitations to the rest. No private grudge was ever suffered to interfere with this politic measure. There was no limitation or exemption—nothing paltry, nor personally offensive, nor invidious. And thus was this noble body, by frequent meetings and collisions of this sort, not only made cheerful by entertainments and diversions, but cemented more closely together by the captivating smiles of urbanity, and the pleasures of

the banquet. The married ladies were always invited, but *le nubili* never. To accommodate so numerous an assembly, it was therefore necessary that the saloons should be spacious. Even on the upper stories it was usual to fit up capacious apartments.

The entertainments at Venice consisted neither of a dinner nor supper. There was a cold collation, a sort of *déjeûné à la fourchette*, consisting of every delicacy and rarity; as those who were in affluent circumstances spared no expense upon these public occasions, either in the way of parade or of luxury.

The magnificent palace of the Doge, in the Piazza di San Marco, is raised upon pillars; but the design having been considered too bold, from the number of vaults or arches, the ground about was raised, so as to encroach somewhat on the building, thereby sinking it a trifle, and the centre ones were filled up. At first, however, this wonderful edifice stood upon columns, having the appearance of a forest of trees.

CHAPTER XVII.

VENICE.

Some of the magnificent Edifices at Venice described.....The Basilica, or Church of San Marco.....The Four Brazen Steeds of Lysippus.....A few Words on the Hyde Park Achilles.....Saint Mark's Square.....The Campanile..... The Procuratia.....The Public Library.....The Ducal Palace.....The Italians particularly fond of Pictures..... A few Words of Advice to the Quakers and other Contemners of the Fine Arts.....A Comparison between the Society of Friends and the Sons of Israel.

I SHALL now offer a few words on some of the most magnificent edifices to be seen in this most singular and beautiful city.

The *Basilica*, or church of San Marco, was begun in the year 977, and finished, in the superb style in which we now behold it, in 1071. It has ten outer gates of Corinthian brass, besides five more within, of the same material, all richly ornamented; and between them there is a gallery, or piazza, for the people to promenade in. Roofs, walls, pavement—the whole of the interior of this stupendous temple, is inlaid with mosaics, in gold and colours, or adorned with

the finest marbles. On entering, and lifting our eyes towards the dome, we at once behold so immense a number of paintings, of the description here mentioned, in the different ceilings, curves, arches, and niches, that it would be impossible to give a sketch of them; each however is accompanied with an explanatory description.

The first artists have all been employed in embellishing its walls. Tintoretto's cartoons have principally served to direct the artificers of these splendid mosaics; but many of them are from designs of a much earlier date. Amidst a multitude of other pillars, all carved out of precious materials, and many of them brought from Constantinople when the Venetians conquered that city, are eight columns of a serpentine shape, carried originally from Jerusalem, and which are said to have adorned the famous temple of Solomon. Both within and without, are to be seen beautiful pillars, of every kind of rare marble, magnificently piled and arranged, though rather according to the Saracenic taste.

Upon the corridor, surmounting the architrave in front, are placed the famous four steeds, in Corinthian brass, of unparalleled merit. The action of the gentle trot has been caught by the artist, and every muscle of these

noble creatures has been displayed with such prodigious felicity, that if their golden surfaces could be converted into the silky gloss of nature, the animals might be supposed to move. They are generally believed to be the workmanship of the celebrated Lysippus, the Greek sculptor, and they certainly leave all modern attempts at equestrian statues at an immeasurable distance.

As I have spoken of one much talked of public ornament, perhaps I shall be excused if I briefly advert to another. I mean the magnificent bronze figure recently erected in Hyde-Park, and given out to be that of Achilles. But, for what reason that personage, who is no where represented by Homer as being fond of retiring, should be considered to be pourtrayed in the statue in question, I think it would be difficult to imagine. On Monte Cavallo, at Rome, where the original is still standing, this noble figure is represented as managing a fiery steed; thereby intending to intimate the power of intelligence in man, over brute matter, and even over his own appetites—in short, an emblem denoting the superiority of mind over body.

Certain persons have, I know, an *inexpressible* aversion to the figure, and are for having it taken away altogether. Thank God, I am not

formed in so fastidious a mould. I would, however, recommend to our arbiters of taste the immediate removal of the shield, and the introduction of the animal; as the unaccountable anomaly which now presents itself would then be done away with. The figure actually appears to be recoiling, and drawing itself away from some portentous emanation from above; whereas, its attitude and the expression of its countenance accord admirably with the rearing up of the animal. Moreover, both hands are suited to the action of holding a bridle.

In short, it cannot be Achilles; for neither hand is seen wielding a weapon. If he be supposed to be fighting with men, a figure of such colossal magnitude would not be looking upwards. If he be warring with the gods, then adieu, Master Hyde-park Achilles! You cannot be Homer's hero; for he was "the beloved of Jove"—

> ——"And, to the Gods resign'd,
> To reason gave the empire of his mind."

The Piazza di San Marco is a vast area, comprizing the most splendid, or at least the richest, piles of architecture in the universe. It is about as large as Lincoln's-Inn-Fields; but,

heavens, how different! It has, in part, been faintly, very faintly, imitated in the Palais Royal at Paris. Near to the church, the *Campanile*, or steeple, three hundred and thirty feet in height, surmounted by an angel in bronze, rears its stupendous head, and stands alone. At the top of this tower was the immortal Galileo, of whom I shall speak more at large hereafter, wont to make his observations on the heavenly bodies. Within a few feet from the Campanile, say thirty or forty, the noble pile of buildings called the *Procuratia*, together with the public Library, display their glories at right angles. The latter is a building of unmatchable elegance and costliness, adorned with statues, executed by the mighty Sansovino, which, in no other edifice in the world, have I seen equalled in point of merit, and much less so in quantity. Arabesque foliage, heads of lions, men, women, children—entire statues of heroes, gods, and females; some with drapery, others *in puris naturalibus*—models of the choicest kind of decoration, disposed with judgment, and bestowed with the magnanimous liberality worthy of a great, and liberal, and wealthy people. Such are the objects, all in marble, and finished with the hand of a master, which grace the Library at Venice.

Some critics, springing from the tribe of economists, have been very severe with the square of St. Mark, and have ventured to pronounce the style of the buildings too exuberant; but, as a poor man once said to a painter, who was complaining that his works were undervalued—"it would be a rare performance indeed, if no fault were found with it"—the same may be said of this noble Piazza.

Fronting the Library, at the distance of about a hundred and fifty feet, one side of the Ducal Palace presents itself, the façade of which overlooks the sea. It is an immense building, originally supported by a crowd of pillars, resembling a forest of huge trees, entirely composed of marble. But the ultramontane beholder, accustomed to the sight of bricks in his own country, cannot readily bring himself to credit the simple fact, that the chequered walls of this incomparable building are not of brick, but are actually squares of red and white marble: the former of which was brought from Verona, and has a good deal the colour of burnt clay.

The court of this palace is extremely fine, especially two of its sides, which are highly decorated with sculptured marble from top to bottom; aided by the famous Giant's stairs, which are

formed of, and inlaid with, fine stones; together with a multitude of statues, chiselled by the most eminent workmen, many of them being antiques.

By the bye, it appears to me not a little extraordinary, that, in the present rage for church-building in England, scarcely any decorations of the richer kind are to be discovered; and, of the ornate style, none; unless a few flourishes of leaves, and flowers, and compositions drawn from inanimate nature, may be classed under that head. A few meagre basso relievos, it is true, have been added, as well as a sprinkling of statues; but, generally speaking, these shabby decorations are beneath mediocrity, and more especially the detached statues.

The above-mentioned splendid edifice has no fewer than five and thirty arches; namely, seventeen on the side looking towards the Library, and eighteen on the side facing the sea, each of them being ten feet wide. The diameter of the shafts which support this vast pile may be guessed at, from the extent of both sides, which is four hundred and five feet. Both the outer and inner porticos serve for the recreation, as well as shelter of the people.

A variety of staircases open into the interior, all of them spacious, and some of them orna-

mented with elaborate paintings of extraordinary merit, in the manner of galleries—a style of decoration common in public, as well as private edifices. Indeed, the Italians generally are uncommonly fond of pictures; and for that reason do I consider them as surpassing the rest of the world, in their admiration of the beauties of nature.

And, indeed, are we not all, more or less, painters? What is the organ of sight but a window for pictures? And of consequence, a human being is an iconoclist (if I may be permitted to use the expression) from his very cradle; unless he happen to be born blind. Vision, or the faculty of sight, is assuredly the foremost of the senses: and, that the first-rate painters have the best sight, no one will pretend to deny. Let the principle be even applied intellectually, and probably it will bear the most scrupulous examination. "Where there is no vision, the people perish," is the language of Scripture: and sublime language it is, implying, that the loss of sight, materially or spiritually, is tantamount to jeopardy and ruin.

What have the Quakers, and other contemners of the elegant arts, to say to my position? Although

I despise no trade, nor find fault with nature for furnishing us with the means of making bread, yet would not I be ranked with those dullards, who cry down painting, and underrate the ornamental dispensations of Heaven. When God, in his wisdom, shall contract his hand, and send forth fruit without blossom, or bestow the blessing of eye-sight for the low purposes of appetite—when the soul shall become warped and neutralized—then, but not till then, will certain notions appear less ridiculous, and less objectionable, than they now do.

The Quakers, in some respects, resemble the Jews; in other respects, they differ widely from that people. The Quakers are proudly prim and particular about their garments: the Jews are much given to filth and finery. The Quakers wear habits of the choicest fabric, and the most delicate texture: the Jews, on the contrary, adopt feathers and all sorts of trinkets and tawdry. The sons of Israel are airy and volatile; while the disciples of George Fox affect a stiff, and blunt, and demure, and rigid deportment. Both Quaker and Jew, however, are studious of accumulating vast wealth. Individually, the Hebrew, in this respect, outstrips the yea-and-nay Friend, and all other denominations. A

small number of them mystify and bewilder the rest of the world. But, as a tribe, advancing in a phalanx, the Quakers threaten the whole fabric of society with subjugation—through the medium of gold. They borrow of no man: neither do they lend readily. On this head, however, I am not positively instructed. At any rate, it is well understood, that they chiefly expend their money amongst those of their own religious profession; though they will sell freely to strangers. To players, musicians, and profane dancers, they never give a farthing in any shape; though they will cordially receive the coin of these same players, and musicians, and profane dancers, at their shops. Peradventure they may allege, that though they take the cash, they give wares in return. True: but the profits! my honest Aminadab—what becomes of the profits? It is, therefore, obvious, that, at this rate, as far as actual calculation warrants us in coming to a conclusion, the Quakers, in the course of time, must outstrip all the rest of mankind in point of riches; and, as long as money bags shall bear the sway, few of us can doubt what sort of Jerusalem those people are looking forward to! Upon the whole, therefore, the Jews—who, occasionally, are friends to the fine arts—are, perhaps, as a

body, less cunning and politic than the Quakers.

Now, so far from painting having a tendency to accelerate the subversion of kingdoms, I believe the direct contrary to be the fact. Rome at this moment beholds, in that beautiful art, a stay, a prop—a child imbued with true filial piety, shedding the balm of comfort over the mind, and administering to the wants of that parent of monarchies, in this her decrepitude. Foreigners who repair to Italy, hie constantly to Rome, and protract their stay in that city, that they may become acquainted with the graphic jewels it contains; thereby contributing to the support of thousands.

With similar views, and with like advantages to the natives, are many other parts of the world visited by travellers. What I have here urged with regard to painting, applies also to sculpture and architecture; and shews that they may be considered profitable, even in the eyes of the political economist. But, their higher and more noble purpose is, the improvement of the mind, and the sublimation of the intellect. For nothing can be more true, than the observation of an admired writer, that "a cultivated taste increases sensibility to all the tender and humane passions, by giving them frequent exercise;

while it tends to weaken the more violent and fierce emotions"—

———" *Ingenuas didicisse fidelitur artes*
Emollit mores, nec sinit esse feros.

" These polish'd arts have humaniz'd mankind,
Soften'd the rude, and calm'd the boist'rous mind."

CHAPTER XVIII.

VENICE.

A general Description of the City of Venice under the Republic .....And of the Manners of its Inhabitants.....The Venetian School of Painting.....Liberality of the Government towards her Great Men.....Tintoretto.....A few Words respecting Canova.....A Hint, en passant, to young Artists .....Character of the Venetians and of the English contrasted.....Milton.....Shakespeare.....Dante.....Ariosto .....The Novellieri.....Blessings of Peace.

To enumerate the paintings which are to be seen at Venice, nearly all of them super-excellent, and to point out their respective beauties, would be a task far beyond the design which I at first proposed to myself; namely, that of merely giving a rapid sketch of what I had beheld, interspersed with such observations and

reflections as were naturally suggested to my mind, by the topics under examination.

For the present, I shall advert to the city of Venice itself; which may be said to rest neither on earth, nor water, nor sky, and which seems the work of divine, rather than of human agency. It is impregnable, though unprotected by fortresses. As Martinelli observes, its boundaries and commencement cannot be traced; neither can its termination be ascertained. Most plentifully supplied, on every side, with whatever is necessary for the use of man, the liberal and mechanical arts were cherished; and commerce was seen flourishing. Men of genius and of talent, in every art and science, were brought forward and rewarded, without parade or ostentation. Grandeur, devoid of glarish frivolity, was every where visible. The costume of the nobles was sober, yet rich, and calculated to attract respect from their inferiors. The dress of all classes of the people was consistent with the simplicity and decency of good sense and of genuine religion. Liberty and tranquillity were every where enjoyed, while prepotency found an instant corrective in wise laws, speedily administered by impartial and upright men, and enforced in behalf of the poor as well as of the rich. Illustrious, too, by the felicity of her un-

dertakings, and the respect in which the republic of Venice was held by every other state, her victories rendered her the admiration of the rest of the world, and respected for her maritime power, as well as her terrestrial dominion—alike feared by land, and formidable on the ocean.

Her government combined profound policy with genuine Christianity, and remained uncontaminated, amidst a profuse waste of treasure and of blood, in wars carried on for the defence of religion. The multiplicity of churches, hospitals, chapels, and other holy places, which were built and endowed, not only decently, but sumptuously, together with the manifold acts of charity offered up to the Deity, and to the afflicted amongst mankind, justify the claim of Venice to the title of the sanctuary of Religion, and the abode of Christian piety and genuine benevolence.

This city, as I have already observed, may be said to rest neither on earth, nor water, nor sky. Not on sky; because, although elevated above the ground her splendid edifices tower aloft, they are nevertheless the abode of mortals. Not on earth; since, out of this, the Almighty has ordained that there should grow fruits and herbs, and not lofty and stupendous palaces, temples, and noble mansions. And, for the

same reason, perceiving those majestic elevations in masonry soaring to the clouds, it cannot be water. Therefore I know not whether this place should be called immoveable water, or unsteady land; terrestrial sky, or aerial earth.

This renowned city may be said to have no foundation; the substratum being neither rock, nor sand, nor solid earth; but mere mud, which yields to the pressure of the foot, yet nevertheless sustains this wondrous pile of buildings; reminding one of the language of the royal Psalmist, when speaking of the Supreme Architect of the Universe, "*qui firmavit terram super aquas*," with regard to his power in forming the universe. For truly the immortal and eternal Spirit could alone have stirred up mortality to raise a work of this kind, to become, as it were, a city of refuge for the righteous, and a sanctuary for the followers of the true faith, amidst clouds of barbarism, and a wilderness of the most furious persecutions!

Behold a city, strong without fortifications! For no walls encircle her; nor are there towers or battlements for purposes of war. Neither are there gates, or highways, or other fixed passages, for egress and regress. But, both by day and by night, around and throughout, this famous city is open and unguarded. Nevertheless,

under Heaven, it possessed not only the means of defence for her own inhabitants, but for the protection of those of the other cities, who reposed under the safeguard of her invincible Lion.

Her beginning is unknown ; since there exists no memorial of the arrival of her first citizens. And although historians date her commencement from the 25th of March, A.D. 421 ; which happened to be the time of laying the foundation of Saint James of Rialto, her first church (supposing it to be the first), and which, for those days, was of extraordinary magnificence ;— it is impossible that that should have been the period; inasmuch as a church is ever preceded by other habitations, especially in the midst of swamps and water. In fact, it is known that, previous to the year 400, people resided there; for then it was that the Gepids and Goths ravaged all Italy, and forced numerous opulent and noble families to repair for safety to the Venetian Lagunes, among the people there settled. In consequence of this emigration, from a state of actual poverty and destitution, the city thenceforward grew and spread with the strides of a giant.

Besides the sublime square of St. Mark, there are at Venice hundreds of noble palaces and stately buildings. Indeed, according to Sanso-

vino, in no city of Europe are there so many sumptuous habitations, of equal grandeur in point of architecture, so completely adapted for comfort and convenience. And to this I may add, without exaggeration, that within a circuit of six miles, the boundaries of this metropolis, the dwellings, as well as the population, are more numerous than in any other city of twice its magnitude.

The vast number of wells which furnish the inhabitants, though surrounded by the sea, with an excellent supply of fresh water, deserves notice; as well as the convenience of proceeding to and fro by boat, and of thereby conveying, by the labour of one man, as many goods as would require ten waggons to forward by land. Canals are seen winding in every direction, dividing the city into seventy-two islands, though never hindering those who prefer walking from going by land, by means of her numerous bridges.

In short, when we behold a city of such magnitude, built upon piles in the midst of the sea, so well supplied with every thing that the heart of man can desire, from the necessary up to the luxury of life, we are forced to acknowledge, that it is scarcely possible that the ingenuity of man should be carried farther.

As a nation, the Venetians are perhaps the most polite in the world; and that from circumstances peculiar to their city: for as there are no carriages nor horses, all ranks and classes of society are compelled to go a good deal on foot, and consequently come much in contact with each other; so that the *morgue aristocratique*, which one sees so much of at Paris or London, never annoys the pedestrian. Even the gondolas, or marine palanquins, were so plain, that the people neither felt themselves offended or humiliated at the sight of them; for the nobles, in the time of the Republic, were restrained by law from extravagance in their equipages.

Venice might formerly be called the city of peace. Every thing in it was quiet and tranquil. The suavity of the Venetian manners resembled the softness of their climate. With singular propriety, the Doge was saluted by the title of "the most *serene* prince." The arts of peace flourished amongst them with amazing splendour. The mine was of a richness scarcely conceivable. In the single branch of painting, a vein was discovered, which, in the course of time, found its way into every palace and great mansion throughout Europe.

The noble-minded Venetians were sensible that a true painter, instructed by nature to view

things correctly, and to represent them with fidelity, must, by her immutable laws, be incapable of speaking falsehoods, or of resorting to servile flattery. Rather, therefore, than lose the advantages to be derived from the possession of their vivid and animated productions, they knew how to smile benignly over any of those rash and impolitic slips, which, in other countries, were wont to draw down upon the artist the indignation and vengeance of those in authority. A striking instance this, of the superior wisdom of the Venetian legislature! For who amongst us would expect, that the brilliant Tintoretto, who pervaded the heavens of truth more like a god than a mortal, should be an obsequious sycophant, a fawning spaniel, a toad, tongue-bound, venomous and vile? I answer—no one possessing the least portion of discernment.

It is not at all surprising, that so few good paintings are to be met with in countries, the potentates of which are enveloped in clouds of ignorance, and surrounded by swarms of fulsome adulators. It should ever be borne in mind by them, that "flattery is evanescent, but works remain:"—an aphorism, this, which at Venice I once heard levelled at Canova; whose performances, by the bye, bear few indications of real

genius; especially such of them as are of the robust and vigorous kind. Greatly influenced and impressed by the innumerable elegant fragments of antique art, which were constantly before his eyes, like many others (indeed, so many, that excepting Michael Angelo, and one or two besides, there is not an exception), he has pillaged from them in such an unmerciful spirit of plagiarism, such parts of his statues as are not copies are feeble, and glaringly inferior to the forms which he has borrowed from antiques, and regulated by their proportions. Of the truth of my assertion, any one will be convinced, by looking at his Venus and Adonis. The greatest care, therefore, should be taken, lest the fine models at Rome should impair, rather than brace and strengthen and invigorate the capacity of the young artist. The antique absolutely bewilders and stupifies many a tyro; who, but for the imposing rhapsodies of a set of blustering bullies in matters of taste, would have been a credit to himself and an honour to his country. Too much allured by the cold marble, they are apt to forsake the carnation of real life, and to fancy nothing strictly correct, that is not hard and marmorean. With all their occasional bad drawing, the Venetians are infinitely superior

to the vile herd of artists of whom I have been speaking.

To revert to what I have said in favour of the Venetians generally. Many a traveller will, I know, contradict me. Let, however, such persons bear in mind, that I have rather been speaking of what they once were, than of what they are now lowered down to, by a long course of misrule. Although I do not profess to belong to the race of ferrets, nor to descend too far into the cespools of infamy, I trust I shall never be backward in distinguishing vice from virtue. That some of the Venetians are notorious cheats, few will deny; for, in all countries, there are rogues without number. In England, strangers are not more especially singled out for sacrifice than the natives; whereas, the lower classes of Italians, and the Venetians in particular, exult whenever a trick succeeds against an Englishman, or indeed any *forestiére*.

But, in what estimation, I ask, are foreigners held by the shopkeepers of England? Is it not a constant practice with them to depreciate and run down every thing of foreign manufacture; even when, in their hearts, they know the sneer to be unmerited? Now, if this be not fraud of the foulest stamp, then am I iguorant what fraud means.

Not that I would insinuate any thing derogatory to the renown of my countrymen—a renown, however, which I fear they have derived more from their golden, than their mental talents. Invention, genius, sublime flights—these are gems which are rarely to be found in English soil. Warped and circumscribed as her children are in matters appertaining to brilliant imagination, their several manufactures are ably wrought, neatly polished, and skilfully finished. On the other hand, the Venetians, though capable of erecting the most gorgeous edifices, will leave the very window-frames in so incomplete a state, that they will not ward off the weather. The truth is, that scarcely any articles but those of right down domestic utility are called for in England, whose people are a kind of Quakers or Methodists, with regard to the blandishments of existence; while the more southern inhabitants of Europe, like the ritual they profess, delight in splendour and pageantry.

Perhaps I shall be excused for observing in this place, by way of illustration, that the British legitimate character, in the sphere of intelligence, bears along with it few portions of excursive imagery. It is neither copious in the lineaments of invention and originality, nor prolific in the charms of novelty. Milton, who

was educated in Italy, and Shakespeare, with all his merit, borrowed freely from the Italians, both with regard to the subject, the thought, and the expression; as well as most copiously from the Holy Scriptures. If Dante, Ariosto, and the *Novellieri* were carefully examined, together with the Bible, much of what those two English poets have written would not be found so very original, as many have hitherto imagined them to be. Not that I would insinuate that Shakespeare, for energy of language, for depth of thought, and for aptness of similitude, is not, *par excellence*, the greatest of poets: but, as a reformer of morals and a queller of the tumultuous passions, little, I think, can be said in his praise. Revenge and murder, and war and havock, are demons by far too familiar with him.

In didactic poetry, and in the science of moral philosophy, the English appear to me to have left the rest of the world far behind. For close metaphysical reasoning; for geometry; for calculations in matters of finance; and for a knowledge of the arid sciences, of every description, connected with political economy, they bear away the palm. The very shopmen in England display instances of cool sagacity, which, though bottomed on sheer craft, are nevertheless admirable, and fully equal to the

astuzia of a member of the French *corps diplomatique.*

But, what do I infer from all this? It is the deed itself, and not the individual who performs it, that we ought to look at; if we wish to arrive at an impartial judgment, and to imitate the final justice of heaven. Habits are not conclusive; though they certainly contribute much towards the formation of character. For instance, all merchants are not uniformly narrow-minded. Much of the staid sort of temper above spoken of is the offspring of certain pursuits. Commercial and other men, travelling from any country to distant lands, bring back with them the secrets practised in business abroad, and those finesses and inventions cease, in the course of time, to be exotics; until, at length, augmented by constant accessions, excited by fresh luxuries, and stimulated by the furies of ambition, the more gentle elements of taste and elegant mental images take their departure; unable to domiciliate with the coarse passions which a spirit for traffic engenders, and which spirit is invariably inimical to the effusions of true genius—that description of genius, I mean, which imparts the light of truth, as the showers of heaven mature the fruits of the earth.

As tempests are accompanied by rains, which may be beneficial to the fields, so, amidst the storms of the soul, are occasional flashes of the divine spirit elicited. But, such flashes are neither safe nor desirable; since, the collision of particular bodies may produce fatal consequences, if the emitted sparks should accidentally be carried amidst inflammable substances.

From all which, it is to be inferred, that the happiest condition is the condition of peace—

> " O beauteous Peace!
> Sweet union of a state! what else but thou
> Gives safety, strength, and glory to a people?"

CHAPTER XIX.

VENICE.

A rapid Sketch of the Causes which led to the Overthrow of the Venetian Republic..... Under the fatal Influence of Francesco Pesaro, the Republic, in evil hour, declare for an Unarmed Neutrality.

At the commencement of the French revolution, the Marquess Antonio Govion Broglio Solari, a Venetian nobleman, having made the

tour of Switzerland, with the Danish ambassador, Baron d'Eirben, returned by the way of Turin, for the purpose of claiming a considerable landed estate, belonging to the family of Solari; who, at the time of the plague in Piedmont, had dispersed themselves in various parts of Italy and France. The above branch settled at Venice, a second at Loretto, and a third, which took the name of Broglio, in France: and all of them are still living.

Before the above-mentioned claim could be established, it was necessary that the Marquess should be presented to the King; without which, a sight of the public documents could not be obtained. The Marquess de Prie, and the Count Perrone were his securities. The King, regarding the family of Solari as aliens, and that of the Bevillacquas, who were in possession of the property, as his subjects, thought proper, for reasons of policy, to refuse the desired permission. But, to soften the disappointment, his Majesty offered to decorate the Marquess Solari with the order of the Cross of San Maurizio Lazzaro; which the Marquess, in his turn, thought fit to refuse, unless his Majesty would accompany it with a *commende;* as he was by no means ambitious, he said, of an empty title.

Such are the distressing situations in which individuals are liable to be placed, who live under absolute and despotic princes, capriciously deciding on the property and lives of their subjects, in despite of law, and justice, and equity!

On leaving the court, the Marquess Solari dined in company with the two noblemen above-mentioned, who then filled the situations of Minister of State and Prime Minister, at the court of Turin. In the course of conversation, the Marquess de Prie said, "My dear Solari, you are about to set off for Venice. If you are no longer a Piedmontese, you are, at any rate, an Italian. Bear in mind what I am about to say to you. Inform the government, of which you are a member, that if we do not agree to enter into an Italian League, we shall all be buried in the common ruin of our country, from the meditated invasion of these modern Goths and Vandals; for they are actually an army of Attilas. The Venetian Republic is the best populated, the richest, and the most beloved government in all Italy. Sixty thousand men would be more easily raised by it, than forty thousand would be in Piedmont."

"Yes," continued the Marquess Perrone, "on the wisdom of the Venetian Senate, and on its future measures, I assert, and am ready

to maintain, that all Italy will be indebted either for its salvation or overthrow. Remember, my dear Solari, I am an old practitioner in the policy of states!"

After having completed a mission, with which he had been charged from his own government to that of Milan, Solari returned to Venice, and faithfully reported what had passed between him and the ministers of the court of Turin. Indeed, dispatches to the same effect had preceded him, in which a reference was made to the verbal communication. He was accordingly called upon officially; and being sincerely attached to his country, he expressed his honest sentiments, with all that ardour and animation which became a free-born subject. Whereupon, Antonio Zen, one of the *Consiglio di Dieci* said, smilingly, "My dear Solari, I admire and appreciate the warmth of your patriotism; but you must excuse me for saying, that you are viewing objects from the wrong end of the microscope."

Zaccaria Valleroso, one of the *Inquisitori di Stato*, being one evening in company, at Venice, with a lady who had been an *attachée* to the court of France, at the breaking out of the revolution, and had escaped from its horrors, and of whom Madame Campan has spoken in

her Memoirs, though she has not named her—the lady happened to say, that she thought of retiring to the north of Europe. "Why, Madame," said Valleroso, "surely you are not afraid of the French army coming to Venice?"

"I beg your pardon, sir," replied the lady; "I think I am sufficiently well acquainted with the French to venture to assert, that if the Venetians do not prevent them from passing the Alps, the territory of the Republic will be no more respected than any other part of Italy; the whole of which will be overrun, when once they have entered Savoy."

"Ah! Madame," said Valleroso, "these are sentiments unbecoming the mouth of a young female. The wisdom of the policy which we have uniformly adopted, will ever preserve us from the suspicion of partiality, by either of the contending parties."

"Have you a couple of hundred thousand men," rejoined the lady, "ready to back your neutrality? If you have not, I cannot help fearing—forgive my womanish alarms—that your condition will be similar to that of those individuals, who are placed 'between two stools.'"

The Grand Inquisitor, who seemed to think my suspicions unbottomed, and that I was fun-

damentally in error, smiled; and, shaking his head, sententiously replied, "Deem me not guilty of a breach of politeness when I tell you, Madam, that prophecy and prognostication are now-a-days out of vogue."

The lady, however,—whom my readers will, by this time, surmise to have been their humble servant—instead of making her intended journey to the north, continued to reside in the south; and having married a Venetian gentleman, she had frequent opportunities of being in the society of this unbelieving Jew of an Inquisitor; but, never did she venture to touch upon the subject of her prophecy, until the French had actually taken possession of Venice; when, in the presence of several persons of distinction, who had been witnesses to the former conversation, she said, "Well, Cavalier Valleroso, will you now tell me, that my prophecies and prognostications were unbecoming the mouth of a young female?"

Valleroso was so much affected, that he could give no answer; and ever after he quitted the company, when chance happened to bring them together. Justice, however, demands that I should give my readers a trait in the character of this man, which does honour to his memory. Having been applied to, both by the French

and the Austrians, to accept a situation under their respective Governments, he unhesitatingly refused. His answer was—"No; for nearly the whole of my life I have been a sovereign. I will not end my days in servitude." Though by no means rich, he was almost the only patrician of Venice, who conducted himself thus nobly and independently.

The above-mentioned despatch from Turin, together with the accounts from France, the meeting of the ministers at Pilnitz, and the Duke of Brunswick's manifesto, induced at last the Venetian Republic to come to a definitive decision; when, after many very long debates, it was determined, through the powerful influence of Francesco Pesaro, well known to have been the partizan of Austria, that the Republic should declare for an *unarmed neutrality*—a word unknown in the political vocabulary, and only fitted to proceed from the mouth of the feeble-minded creature by whom it was uttered.

The Venetian Senate, which, from its wise regulations, had never had occasion, since the formidable conspiracy of the Marquess de Bedmar, in the year 1618, even to suspect internal commotion, were now so overawed by the numerous false reports spread by interested emis-

saries, that they no longer considered themselves safe in holding their public deliberations in the Ducal Palace, and therefore changed their place of meeting every evening, from one private palace to another. The night before they abdicated the Government, that wretched *imbécile*, the Doge, Manin, was heard to say, at the *conversazione* of the Senator Damula, "I am sorry for those poor creatures who will be deprived of their bread by this misfortune; but as for us, we shall all be as well off as ever!"

O! had there been but a Dandolo, a Foscari, a Tron, or any other man of spirit among the Senators, the white livered cowardly Doge would have lost his head for his pusillanimity—the seat of government would have been changed as it formerly had been, to one of the Grecian Islands, and the Government would never have consented to have made so miserable, so disgraceful an exit!

To give my readers a correct notion of the extent of the treachery and corruption that prevailed, and of the degeneracy of some of the leading members of the Senate, I will here introduce some striking facts.

The Cavalier Condolmier, the High Admiral, who had the command of a fleet of observa-

tion, consisting of small vessels, to protect the entrance of the Lagunes, and who had, for some months, been detained at the mouth of the Adriatic, one day took it into his head to invite the Government and the public, to be present at a grand naval manœuvre of all the ships in the harbour under his command. The day at length arrived; when Venice, and the whole Terra Firma, would have proved a rich field for the active exertions of our nimble fingered gentry of London; since nearly all the inhabitants had quitted their houses, in order to be present at the wonderful exploits of this Nelson of the Venetian Lagunes. The roads from Treviso, Padua, and along the banks of the Brenta, were thronged with travellers, on foot and on horseback, in carriages and in carts. The lakes were covered with gondolas, peotti, open boats, burchielli, barges from Padua, gallere, &c. &c. &c.

When the Rear Admiral shewed himself in his full uniform, scraping and bowing to the anxious spectators, as a mountebank does while selling his vile nostrums, he commenced the farce, by ordering the signals to be given. This was accordingly done; but every one of them remained unanswered. Up and down ran boys and men, from one mast and shrowd to another;

but all to no purpose. An apology was made, and the ill success was attributed to want of practice. The Admiral then made signals to another vessel, but with the like success. After firing and making tokens for more than an hour, like men shooting at dead fish, and after exhausting speaking trumpets, tearing sails, and casting anchors; after having, in short, failed both to right and left, the poor Admiral was assailed in front, by all those who were disappointed. Night, however, coming to his assistance, the charlatan contrived to make his escape, in a whole skin: and thus ended this memorable day, as it had commenced—*in smoke!*

Such were the valorous saviours of their country, who remained to protect the Lagunes, and to hail all persons who passed their vessels, whether coming to, or going from Venice! When the fatal day at length arrived, and the revolution had actually taken place, most of the respectable inhabitants fled to the Terra Firma, from the plunder and confusion that were its inevitable consequences; but which, to say the truth, was nothing, in comparison with what it might have been, and what it actually had been, in every other place, on similar distressing occasions.

The sailors in these guard ships were from Dalmatia, commonly called Sclavonians, and active votaries to the nimble-fingered Mercury. Fortunate was it for Venice, that these fellows were, at the time, absent from the city. A gondola that happened to be passing, was boarded by them, and asked, "What was going on at Venice?" "Oh, horrible!" answered some of the passengers; "they are robbing and plundering the houses in all directions." "Jesu Maria, have mercy upon us!" exclaimed these honest Sclavonian tars, "let us go instantly, and get a watch or two a-piece, and a little plate and linen, to take home to our dear wives and children!"

CHAPTER XX.

VENICE.

Proofs of the Determination of the Venetian Republic to maintain a strict Neutrality.....Proposition made to it by the British Government.....General Acton proposes an Italian League.....Falsehood of Buonaparte's Charges against the Republic.....Conduct of Francesco Pesaro after the Sale of Venice to the Austrians.....Anecdotes of the great Francesco Foscari, Prince Kaunitz, and the Empress Maria Theresa .....Of the Count de Vergennes and his impenetrable Cypher .....And of Lewis the Sixteenth, and General La Fayette.

As a proof that the Venetian Republic had no intention whatever of taking any part against the French, it will be only necessary for me to state, that Lavizzari, when he was Venetian resident at the Court of Great Britain, sent to his government a proposition made by the British cabinet, offering a certain number of ships to protect the Venetian territories in the Adriatic, besides a considerable sum of money, wherewith to raise an additional number of auxiliaries, if necessary. This proffer the Republic thought fit to decline. The proposition was first made in the year 1793. It was afterwards twice re-

peated, and as often rejected; accompanied, however, with expressions of their liveliest gratitude for the interest which the British ministry had taken in the welfare and safety of the Republic.

A copy of one of the documents containing this refusal, fell into the hands of the French Government; by what means has not been ascertained. It is, however, supposed to have had some influence on the conduct of Buonaparte towards the Republic; from the certainty it afforded him, that he had nothing to fear from England, in consequence of any aggression he might think proper to commit. The said copy of the rejected proposition was shewn to the Venetian minister in Switzerland, in consequence, as is supposed, of Pesaro's project of an unarmed neutrality.

General Acton was then the minister of Naples. On the despatches to the British ambassador, Sir William Hamilton, containing the refusal of the Venetian Republic, being shown to him, though the general did not wish the King of Naples to take any share in the English system of naval armament about to be established in the Mediterranean, he nevertheless thought it highly necessary, that an Italian league should be entered into; and, so sensibly was he affected

by the perusal of the above despatch, containing the determination of the Venetian senate, that he wrote an energetic memorial to the Republic, dissuading them from persisting in the fatal notion of remaining neutral; and, above all things, of remaining unarmed.

Nor would he even trust his despatch to Buscinello, the Venetian ambassador, but sent a Neapolitan nobleman expressly to Venice, with a proposition for maintaining a line of guardships, to be united with the Venetian, from Capo Passero to Corfu. The Grand Master of Malta also undertook to guard the line, from that island up to the Levant; while Pope Pius the Sixth offered to assist the Venetians, by sea and land, with all the Italian powers; and remonstrated, in the strongest terms, against the impolitic adoption, on their part, of an unarmed neutrality. But, all was of no avail. The Government of Venice had taken its measures; and was resolved not to swerve therefrom.

With what face then, could Buonaparte accuse that Republic of treachery, in arming against the French, and adduce that treachery as a formal reason for violating the Venetian neutrality; for inducing Bergamo and Brescia to revolt; and for directing the horrible massacre

at Verona, and effecting the overthrow of its Government?

But all these existing documents are nothing, when compared to the mass of proofs which could be adduced, exonerating the Venetian Republic from every foul charge made against it, by the then commander of the army of Italy. Nay, Barras himself could have confuted the whole of Buonaparte's base accusations; and the other four members of the Directory had very *weighty* reasons—reasons as big as a plum—for guaranteeing the independence of the Venetian States. No: they are indebted for all their distresses to the primitive sin of not keeping up an army by sea and by land, which might act in conjunction with those of the above-mentioned powers, and thereby cause their neutrality to be respected.

From all which, I think it is abundantly evident, that the ruin of Italy may with justice be attributed to that weak, as well as wicked senator, Francesco Pesaro; whose influence, and whose notorious partiality for the Austrians, induced the Venetian Republic to depart from its antient system of an armed neutrality; whereby, on all former occasions, it had caused itself to be respected. But, influenced by cor-

ruption—by ambition—by folly—and by personal interest, he compelled the senate to adopt a neutrality unarmed, and had the baseness to stigmatize all those who opposed him, as traitors and jacobins.

Francesco Labbia was likewise in the interest of Austria. On the first reverses, however, of the Imperial army, whilst he was Podesta of Padua, he opened the gates of that city to the French. He was nevertheless rewarded with a German wife, and was favourably received at Vienna—in recompense for betraying the government of his native country!

As soon as Venice had been sold by Buonaparte to the Austrians, Francis Pesaro was dispatched by the latter government from Vienna, whither he had fled, to place the foreign yoke on the necks of his fellow-citizens; those citizens who, during the space of fourteen centuries, had governed themselves, without suffering the humiliation of any foreign interference. The first act of Pesaro's authority, after his return to Venice, was the banishment of his only brother, Pietro Pesaro; who, at this moment, resides, and has been residing ever since, in the outskirts of London, in a small mansion, not so large as one of the out-houses of his

magnificent marble palace, on the grand canal at Venice.

Francis Pesaro, and a few of his followers, equally ignorant as himself, and who had always been considered to be so by the major part of the senators, and especially by the great *pater-patriæ*, Francesco Foscari, who generally made Pesaro the laughing-stock of the senate, whenever he attempted to open his mouth—being left, by their deaths, masters of the field of action, opposed the Republic in every thing that tended to its welfare; but most especially in that one thing, so essential to its own dignity as an independent state, and to the salvation of all Italy—an armed neutrality.

Having introduced the celebrated Frances Foscari to the notice of my reader, I shall, I am confident, be excused a short digression.

It is unnecessary for me to inform him, that the winged lion of St. Mark was the antient arms of the Republic; that saint having become the patron of Venice, ever since his remains were brought to that city from the Levant. Even the animal itself is so represented; holding between his claws the book of the laws of that evangelical saint, and distinguished from his brother lions by having a crown on his head,

and wings rising out of his shoulders; which insignia were at the head of all the decrees and acts of the Republic. This circumstance gave rise to the witty reply of Foscari to Prince Kaunitz, the Austrian minister, on his asking one day, in the presence of the Empress Maria Theresa, at whose court Foscari then resided as the Venetian ambassador, "where the Republic had found its *winged* lion?" "In the same forest," replied Foscari, "in which Austria discovered her *two-headed* eagle."

The beautiful Maria Theresa laughed heartily, not only at Foscari's answer, but at the effect it produced on Prince Kaunitz; who, suddenly starting back, nearly knocked off his superb court wig, which it usually took him a couple of hours every morning to adjust to his satisfaction.

The answer given to the Austrian minister by the shrewd Venetian, recals to my recollection a singular trait in the character of Prince Kaunitz, shewing the uncommon attention which he paid to his dress, and especially to his peruke and his teeth; the latter of which he would wash after dinner at table, in the presence of his guests. This eminent diplomatist, who had been the confidential minister of five successive monarchs, had, like all other great men,

his foibles; thereby proving themselves to be mere mortals. For, throughout every scene of life, virtue and wisdom and talent will be found opposed by vice and folly and presumption; generosity and magnanimity by sordid avarice; and sublimity of soul in theory, by deeds of littleness in practice. I venture the reflection after long personal experience.

This same Prince Kaunitz was the most distinguished German dandy of his day, and was, as I have said, especially particular in the arrangement of his wig. I had one morning an appointment with him on some business for a friend; when his secretary told me he was sure the Prince had forgot the hour he had appointed, as it was the precise time which he devoted to his toilet, and that I should have to wait at least a couple of hours. While I was so waiting, this secretary related to me the following particulars.

It was the usual practice, he said, for the valet-de-chambre to dress the said wig on the Prince's head. As soon as the row upon row of curls had been diplomatically and skilfully arranged, the knight of the curling irons next emptied at least a pound of powder into his pouch, and, from an aperture in the door, made for the purpose, puffed it into an empty room.

When the room was completely filled therewith, the Prince, with a mask on his face, entered it, and took a few stately turns backward and forward, until every hair of his perfumed perriwig had received its due quantum of the powdery particles.

Foscari, perceiving that Maria Theresa enjoyed the above retort, took the liberty of telling her Imperial Majesty, that she might smile, but it was no laughing matter to himself, who, on his return to Venice, after a three years' residence at her court, could not boast of having so much as once had the pleasure of beholding her Imperial Majesty's countenance.

Maria Theresa, imagining that the Venetian ambassador had attempted to say something very witty, desired him to explain himself. Upon which, Foscari replied, "May it please your Majesty, I am unfortunately so near-sighted, that without my magnifying-glass, I am unable to distinguish the features of any individual I am in conversation with; but I dare not, of course, venture to make use of it in your Imperial Majesty's presence."

"Yes, yes! Foscari;" said the Empress, "pray make use of your glass as much as you please; only take care that you do not

magnify my defects!" Foscari accordingly availed himself of the royal permission, exclaiming while doing so, "Bella! bella! sì, per Dio!" and continuing to look at her Imperial Majesty, until he quitted the court.

The great Francis Foscari was also ambassador at Constantinople, at the period when the famous Count de Vergennes was resident in the same capacity. Both of them being men of liberal minds, the Count, discovering the wonderful sagacity and superior talents of Foscari, soon became his most intimate friend, as well as his disciple in politics. During Foscari's lifetime, no affair of importance took place in France, after the Count became minister, on which he was not consulted. Happy, most happy, would it have been for France, if her able minister had been at liberty to profit by that great man's counsel! It was from Foscari, that the Count de Vergennes obtained the famous cypher, by means of which he carried on that impenetrable correspondence, which baffled all the courts of Europe, and even his own most confidential secretaries; who wrote the letters, and received the answers, in this famous cypher, but nevertheless were unable to guess at a tittle of their contents. This

cypher afterwards proved of the greatest service to many persons of the highest rank, connected with the French court.

And here I cannot but expres my astonishment, that Madame Campan, who has been so minute in her details of the dreadful sufferings to which the royal family were subjected, should never once have made mention of the infamous system of espionage which was resorted to, and the treachery which was used, with regard to the royal correspondence on the most trifling subjects, by the very persons who were in the service of the court. Perhaps those individuals were still living at the time of her writing her Memoirs; and that therefore she was unwilling to subject herself to the vengeance, which an exposure of their baseness might have brought down upon her.

Be this as it may, I well know that the Count de Vergennes, during his administration, made use of this cypher, in all matters of importance; and that the whole of his correspondence with Foscari was carried on through the same medium. I know not at what period of the troubles in France—whether at the time of the famous necklace affair, or after the horrors committed at Versailles on the sixth of October, or at a later period of the revolution—it was put

into the hands of a person who communicated it to the Queen; but I do know that she was thereby enabled to avoid discoveries in the course of her extensive correspondence. As I was frequently employed in the confidential transactions of the ever-to-be-regretted Marie Antoinette, I often assisted in copying the said despatches, in the presence of the good Madame Campan. It, of course, became necessary that I should have the cypher, to instruct the persons to whom the letters were addressed, and of which I was generally the bearer, how to arrive at their contents.

As the key to it was changed every time, and could be altered at pleasure, it might be rendered of the greatest utility; as it was morally impossible for a third person to discover what was passing, though in possession of the cypher and the despatches, without being previously made acquainted with the key fixed on between the writer and the person to whom the letter was addressed. It has ever since remained in my possession.

Still further to lengthen this digression. On the day that the King and royal family of France were desirous of going to St. Cloud, at the time when the people were averse to their leaving the Tuilleries, M. de La Fayette, who

commanded the national troops then on guard at the palace, entered the king's closet, for the purpose of knowing his majesty's pleasure. "From what I have observed from my window," said the king, "I fear our intended journey cannot be carried into effect without bloodshed; and, that being the case, I shall endeavour to persuade the Queen not to attempt it." La Fayette made his bow and retired.

On going out of the palace, he met General Bournonville (from whom I had the anecdote), and said to him, "the king's irresolute conduct this day, will very probably cost me my head, and his majesty his crown. Luckily I have not committed myself, by ordering the troops to make any resistance; for I am sure I should have been sacrificed, from the king's want of firmness. I wish he may not have cause to repent his excessive condescension to the will of the populace."

As I have already introduced the name of the great Maria Theresa, the mother of the beautiful Marie Antoinette, I shall wind up this chapter of digressions with a few anecdotes relative to her Imperial Majesty, which were communicated to me, when I visited Vienna, in the year 1794, by the Prince de Ligne.

Maria Theresa was considered the handsomest woman of her day. She was the last of the race of the Counts of Hapsburgh, and, history says, of the noble race of Swiss Carbonari, since known by the name and title of the House of Austria.

She was married, in the year 1736, to Francis Duke of Lorraine and Bar, generally known by the title of Francis, the first Emperor of Germany; by whom the Empress Queen had many children, and to nine of whom I have had the honour of being presented: namely, Joseph the Second; Leopold the Second, Grand Duke of Tuscany, and afterwards Emperor; Maximilian, Grand Master of the Teutonic Order, Coadjutor of Cologne and Munster, and Elector of Cologne; Ferdinand, who was Archduke of Milan; Caroline, Queen of Sicily; Marie Antoinette, Queen of France; Maria Amelia, Archduchess of Parma; Christina, Archduchess of the Low Countries; Marianna, Archabbess of Prague and Clagenfurth; and Elizabeth, Duchess of Inspruck; all of whose hands, excepting those of Joseph the Second, I have had the honour of kissing.

The Emperor Francis was considered as handsome a man, as Maria Theresa was a

woman. He was crowned Emperor by the name of Francis the First, jointly with his consort; she being the heiress to the crown. By his affability of deportment, his condescension, and his polished manners, he completely won the heart of his beautiful, but haughty empress.

Being, however, naturally of a jealous disposition, Maria Theresa soon fancied that she had discovered a growing attachment, on the part of her husband, to one of the beauties of her court, a maid of the royal bed-chamber. Her majesty taxed this innocent female with the suspected crime, in so abrupt a manner, that the lady could not conceal her indignation, and was in the act of quitting the royal presence, without deigning to answer the charge. This conduct enraged the great Maria Theresa to such a degree, as to induce her to vent her passion on her supposed rival, by presenting her with an imperial box of the ear.

It happened to be levee day. The antechamber was at this time crowded with company, and the celebrated Prince de Ligne was entering the presence chamber, at the very moment when her Majesty had been lavishing her favours with so bountiful a hand. Knowing that his tongue resembled a cathedral bell on

the death of a sovereign, and that if the prince left her presence without some explanation, the circumstance would soon be made public to all the inhabitants of Vienna, Maria Theresa, turning round to him, with the greatest composure and affability, said—"My dear Prince, it is some time since I promised you the order of Maria Theresa, together with my own picture." Taking then from her scrutoire an elegant snuff-box, in which was the said order, and on its lid her majesty's portrait, set in diamonds, she presented the Prince with the same, and interrogated him as to what he thought of the likeness. "Madam," replied he, "the proof you have just now given" (alluding to the box on the ear) "is a copy of nature itself."

On the Prince's returning to the drawing-room, where the circumstance had got wind, he was surrounded by a crowd of courtiers, who had heard the quarrel, and were all anxious for his explanation of the cause of it. Observing this, the Prince showed the box and the portrait to a lady who was standing near him, saying at the same time, in a tone sufficiently loud to be heard by her Majesty—"the *present* makes me forget the past!"

Maria Theresa was so jealous of her husband, that on his going one evening to the Free

Mason's club without first acquainting her with his intention, she had the Lodge surrounded by guards; and, on the officer who commanded them demanding, in her Majesty's name, the immediate dispersion of the meeting, Francis, presenting himself, said, "Return to the Empress, your mistress, and inform her that, wherever her husband is one of the number, she may rest assured that nothing of a treasonable nature will ever be plotted against her, or against the state."

CHAPTER XXI.

VENICE.

Further Reflections on the Overthrow of the Venetian Republic .....Its happy Condition between the Years 1780 *and* 1793 *.....Francisco Pesaro appointed Austrian Commissary-General.....His Cruelty.....And Death.....Anecdotes of the Venetian Gondolieri.....Anecdote of the President Montesquieu when at Venicee.....The Canal Orfano.....The Sbirraglia.....Duganas.....Smuggling.*

To return to the affairs of the Venetians, at the period of the overthrow of the Republic. The salvation of all Italy, as well as the preservation of her own rank in the scale of nations,

required that Venice should continue an independent state; as it had been during the many wars in the south of Europe, between the contending powers of France, Spain, and Austria. The armies of either of those powers, on entering the Venetian territories, were immediately met by an armed force, and conducted by it to the frontiers. But then the Republic had in constant activity from thirty to forty thousand troops—a number which was more than sufficient to keep either party in awe; besides four-and-twenty ships of war, ready to be launched, in case of an aggression on the part of any one of the said powers.

The wisdom of such a step on the part of the Government was obvious, since it effectually protected its subjects from molestation. The advantages resulting from such a line of conduct may be guessed at from the fact, that the Republic never once compromised its neutrality with any of the belligerent powers, but always maintained a rigid impartiality, and thereby caused itself to be alike respected and feared.

From the year 1780 to the year 1793 or 1794, the Republic was the richest, the most flourishing, and the most popular power in all Italy. It had not been engaged in war, whether internal or external, for many, many years. The

population, throughout the whole Venetian territory, was exasperated beyond measure against the sanguinary *Masnadieri*, who had butchered the King and Queen of France. All that they wanted was a leader; and, if an able one had stepped forward, the horde that was then spreading devastation and ruin over all Italy would have been exterminated root and branch. Nothing was wanted but the countenance and encouragement of the government; and, in vindication of that government from the foul charges which have been brought against it, I am bound to declare, that their folly in rejecting the wise proposition for keeping up an armed force, ready to check the violence of the French invader, was the chief cause of their ruin, and of his aggrandizement.

It was Pesaro—the base, the imbecile, the treacherous Pesaro—who bullied the Senate into a departure from their former system of an armed neutrality. The spirit of vigorous resistance which actuated the Dandolos, the Zens, the Trons, the Barbarigos, and that *pater patriæ* Francesco Foscari, had long since fled, and those great men buried in the general ruin. The consideration is a truly awful one. The bare idea of seeing from ten to fifteen thousand individuals, of all descriptions, on one

day in a state of comfort and even of affluence, and on the next thrown upon the very *pavé*, is enough to rouse the most sluggish of mortals into activity, "be his brains as barren as the banks of Libya." And such must ever be the case, during the interregnum between the downfall of one government and the organization of a new one.

When Francesco Pesaro first came to Venice, as the Austrian Commissary-General, furnished with full powers to inflict on his countrymen that persecution, imprisonment, and banishment, which he himself so richly merited at their hands, for having first betrayed and then deserted the government, a grand fête was given at the Filarmonica to this modern Sylla, at which Madame Grassini was engaged to sing. When I entered the saloon, the concert had already commenced; and a gentleman, one of the *chers amis* of the above singer, whose name was Giuseppe Ferro, a corn-factor, obligingly gave up his own seat for my accommodation. Of course, I entered into that kind of conversation with him which his civility demanded.

On the other side of the saloon was seated the great Francesco Pesaro. As soon as the first act of the concert was over, my husband, being

an old acquaintance of the mighty man, went across the room to congratulate him on his return to his country; and, pointing to the spot where I was sitting, he said, "Yonder is my better half; but she is so near-sighted, that I am sure she cannot distinguish your Excellency at this distance."—"What," replied Pesaro, "the lady who is conversing with the gentleman by the side of her? I must go and have a little chat with her." Accordingly, Pesaro crossed the saloon, and very politely seated himself by me, and asked who the person was who had so much engaged my attention, as to prevent me from recognizing him. Unluckily for the poor man, I replied, "It is M. Ferro, to whose politeness I am indebted for my seat."—"What!" exclaimed Pesaro, "that *birbone*, who was a member of the municipality?"—"The same," said I; "and who, at the time of the downfall of the government, deserved so much from his country, by preventing the city from falling a prey to the plunder of the *Schiavoni*."

On that very night, poor Ferro was arrested by the agents of Pesaro; dragged from his relatives, who entirely depended on him for their subsistence, without any accusation being adduced against him, without being heard in his

defence, or allowed to communicate with any one of his family, or receive the smallest assistance; and sent off as a galley slave, to work on the Danube at Olmutz; where he remained until the French retook the Venetian territories, when, with many others, he was released from captivity, and restored to his numerous friends and distressed relations.

It was currently reported, that Pesaro had a list of nearly three hundred individuals, who were to have shared the fate of poor Ferro; if Providence, in its mercy, had not ordered it otherwise, by shortly afterwards calling the unfeeling and unprincipled man before that awful tribunal, against whose decision there is no appeal. The wretched man was seized with excessive delirium, brought on by turning a private difference into public revenge, and expired after an illness of a few days. His death gave life and liberty to some of the most distinguished of his fellow-citizens He might truly be considered as the malignant genius of the Venetians, in the same way as the hunch-backed Visconti was of the Milanese.

What I have further to say respecting Venice will principally consist of miscellaneous anecdotes, collected during my long residence in this interesting city, calculated to make my

readers still further acquainted with the manners and the customs of its inhabitants under their happy Republic.

I have already mentioned the Ducal Palace. In the hall of the Pregadi, which was furnished with benches having backs to them, the Senate formerly assembled. When any of those warm debates took place of which I have elsewhere spoken, it was customary for the barcajuoli, or boatmen belonging to the patricians, to assemble with their gondolas on the canal, close to that side of the palace which overlooked the port; considering themselves the second body in the state, and the native defenders of the first.

If, during the time that the senators were shut up in close deliberation, which in the winter often continued till late in the night, any disturbance happened to take place, they would shew their vigilance, by watching the motions of the people around them with circumspection, and without betraying the slightest impatience or inquietude, or vaunting themselves on being engaged in the service of *i principi*, as they were accustomed to denominate their masters.

Ministering to the inclinations of the nobles, and being the confidants of their pleasures, as well as a sort of *mouchards* of the government,

each of them fancied himself in the secrets of the state. They would nevertheless treat those of their own calling, who were not so fortunate as to be in the service of the nobles, on a footing of equality, considering them as brothers; which, indeed, is the word they make use of whenever they meet. "*Addio caro fradel,*" "*perme fradel,*" &c., are the customary salutations on passing and repassing in their gondolas, calling to one another, "*non travagliar, non strascinar, i poveri cristiani.*" When this conduct is contrasted with the language of vulgar abuse made use of by the hackney-coachmen and watermen of London and Paris, the Venetian Gondolieri actually appear to be saints.

This striking difference is mainly to be attributed to their detestation of the filthy habit of intoxication—a virtue common to the whole tribe. I have seen many of the Gondolieri who actually knew Tasso by heart, and would recite, or rather chant, whole stanzas, while rowing the passengers along the canals. The practice is, however, rare at present. And, no wonder! For the very appearance of the German *sauer kroute* gentry, is sufficient to drive from the heads of these poor fellows, all remembrance of the sweet strains of the divine author of *La Gerusalemme Liberata!*

The Gondolieri are, in general, a robust race of men, remarkably well made, healthy, good-looking, cleanly in their persons, and frugal in their mode of living. They participate in the natural gaiety of their country, and pass the greater part of their lives, *tête-à-tête* with nobles, citizens, and the strangers of distinction who daily arrive at Venice. From their native intelligence and vivacity they often start subjects of conversation, and are suffered to use a greater portion of freedom, in their intercourse with passengers, than is usually accorded to persons gaining their livelihood by a manual occupation.

Of the truth of this remark, let the reader take the following as an instance. In Venice, the streets are lighted up at night with small lamps, pretty much in the same way as the streets of Paris. As one of the Gondolieri was drawing the lamp up, a noble patrician, who happened to be passing, desired him to raise it a little higher. Upon which the man answered, "It is sufficiently high for your and my horns to pass under, but if those of your Excellency are longer than mine, I will certainly draw up the lamp, so that you may pass on without coming in contact with it." I had this anecdote from the gentleman who was the cause of it,

and who hastened with it to the Casino; where it formed the subject of the evening's *conversazione*, and certainly lost nothing of its sprightliness by the manner in which it was related.

So attached are the Gondolieri to their watery element, that if they happen to have a dispute with a man coming from Mestre or Fusina, two small towns which are only three or four miles from Venice, and are asked by their comrades who he is, they answer, "*mi so un foresto, chi vien da çà del diavolo*—he is a foreigner, and comes from the devil knows where."

One of these barcajuoli being on a visit at Genoa to his sister, who was a dancer at the theatre there, happening to be looking at one of the famous stone bridges of that city, a person accosted him, and asked whether he was not a stranger: the poor fellow answered in the negative. On returning to his sister's lodging, he told her, laughingly, what had taken place. "*Vu sta,*" said he, "*che vi conta una bella storia: stavo guardar quel ponte la sù; mi vien uno a domandarmi se son foresto?*" "I hope," said his sister, "you answered yes?" "*Buzzera!*" continued he, "*ho detto che son Venezian.*" "But," rejoined his sister, "you are at this present time at Genoa, and are therefore a stranger." It, how-

ever, took a great deal of time to convince the man that he could be a stranger, out of Venice.

On the feast of San Rocco, the Doge and Senate used to hear mass at that beautiful church in great state. The procession was conveyed in peotas, or covered barges. I was once present when it was passing under one of the bridges; where two or three of the unemployed Gondolieri belonging to their Excellencies were belabouring with their tongues those who were engaged in rowing the *cortège*. The wordy contest brought to the windows of their boats the whole of the Signoria, who seemingly enjoyed with much good-natured satisfaction the native sallies of this privileged order. Indeed, the Gondolieri of Venice appear to possess prerogatives similar to those which were formerly exercised by M. de Roquelaure, at the court of Lewis the Fourteenth: "*on leur fait honneur de tous les bons-mots, que des raisons de décence ou de politique ne permettent pas aux véritable pères de se déclarer.*"

From the period of the rupture which took place between the Republic and Benedict the Fourteenth, that Pope refused to give a cardinal's hat to any of the Venetian bishops. At his death, when Rozzonico, the cardinal bishop of Padua, was elected to the holy see, the Gon-

dolieri, as he was a Venetian by birth, were accustomed to say, "We have long been without hats; but now we have the hatter—*abbiamo adesso il capelliere.*"

The anniversary of the *Festa di San Rocco* still continues to be the day on which the Venetian artists exhibit their annual performances in the *Scuola di San Rocco.* It is one of the first academies in Venice, and is filled with the works of Tintoretto, Titian, Paul Veronese, and other eminent masters. I was amazingly struck with Tintoretto's picture of the Annunciation—as well as with many others.

It has never been ascertained, whether the President Montesquieu paid a visit to Venice as an indifferent traveller, or as a *mouchard* of the court of France—(which court was constantly in the habit of giving those honourable commissions to persons of all ranks and classes, not excepting the fair sex)—or whether it was to collect information, from the valuable political manuscripts in which the Republic abounded, and which might furnish matter for his celebrated work, "*l'Esprit des Loix.*"

Whatever might have been the President's motives, his conduct during his stay excited considerable suspicion. He was observed running from one coffee-house to another; interro-

gating every body who would listen to him; and taking copies and drawings of every thing he saw and heard. At length he received a significant hint, that his longer stay at Venice would neither be agreeable to the Government nor to the French ambassador; and at the same time he was particularly cautioned, to be extremely careful with regard to his papers; as, in crossing the lakes from Venice to Fusina, it was not improbable that he would be arrested on his journey.

He therefore shortly after took his leave of Venice, with his head full of the *Canal Orfano*.* The Baron was not arrested; but, when he was in the middle of the lakes, perceiving another gondola making up to him, he fancied he was going to be attacked, and, in his panic, had recourse to the expedient of Castor, when pursued by the hunters; and, taking from his tra-

* The rumour runs, that the Venetian Government used to cause their state prisoners to be privately strangled in their cells, and then thrown into the above canal. Others assert, that they were put into sacks alive, and thrown from the windows of their prison into their watery grave. In the life of Gustavus Vasa, who gloriously delivered the Swedes from the tyrannical yoke of Christian the Second of Denmark, we are told, that that execrable monster amused himself in compelling his nobility of both sexes to sew the sacks in which they were to be drowned.

velling bag all the memorandums and observations he had made during his stay at Venice, he committed them to the watery deep.

The whole, however, was a manœuvre played off to frighten the author of the "Spirit of Laws." If the Baron had had sufficient courage to direct his gondolier to proceed, he would have passed on unmolested; as the individuals employed to put the trick into execution were ordered not to impede his departure by examining his baggage; but the fear of being pursued by the boats of the *Sbirraglia*, made the author of "*l'Esprit*" lose his spirits, and every other consideration but personal safety.

The communications between Venice and various parts of the Terra Firma are so numerous, that, besides the different Duganas, or custom-houses, the lakes were covered with boats filled with *Sbirri;* and, if a foreigner happened not to be accompanied by an ambassador's gondola, he was often subjected to repeated unpleasant visits from this honourable class of Venetian Bow Street runners.

They dared not, however, to approach the gondolas of a foreign minister, a consul, or their agents; which were considered sacred. At that time, every body wore silk stockings, and no person of decent appearance would have thought

of entering the theatre, or the casinos, in boots, for fear of being suspected of having been confined for felony, and of wearing them to hide the marks of the chains on his legs. Such, indeed, was the common observation of the Venetians on persons who were discovered to be thus habited.

Though the stocking weavers of Venice were unable to furnish a tenth part of the quantity necessary for the supply of the inhabitants, those manufactured in France were strictly prohibited. But, notwithstanding this prohibition, every body wore them; and even the *sbirraglia* would supply the dealers in contraband goods with them, as well as private families. The Republic therefore thought proper to take off the prohibition, and allowed the stockings to enter the Venetian states, on paying, at the rate of a livre a pair, duty. The contraband traffic still continuing, the duty was reduced first to half a livre, and next to only twopence the pair; after which, it was not worth the while, for so small a sum, to run the risk of selling them. Thus was the contraband traffic in stockings put an end to, and the article made a source of considerable revenue to the state; and thus were many thousands produced to the Government, which before were divided be-

tween a few worthless wretches, who lived by the perversion of that justice, which they were paid liberal salaries to uphold. O, self-interest, self-interest, how fatal is thy influence! How often dost thou change the noblest of God's works; men who, but for thy accursed seduction, would have lived honourable and virtuous, and died spotless and revered to the latest posterity!

My reader may lay it down as a maxim, that when a man cuts his throat, he has nobody's interest at heart but his own. A painful reflection this, for public responsibility! In times of civil warfare and general commotion, many a suicide has been committed; but, there is no instance, in the whole history of ambition, of a mortal, in the flower of manhood, and in the possession of every earthly enjoyment, devoting himself to self-destruction, unless he has been detected in the act of attempting to usurp legal power, illegally. When sovereigns are merciful, and colleagues are discreet enough to maintain a prudent silence, the unravelment of the mystery becomes the business of history!

CHAPTER XXII.

VENICE.

Venetian Amusements.....Volo dal Campanile.....Captain Manby.....The Niccolotti and Castellani.....Good news for Gourmands.....List of Italian Delicacies.....Glass Manufactory at Murano.....Barano.....Venice the parent of other Maritime States.....The Venetians once the models of excellence, in dress, manners, and customs.....A solemn appeal to the Governments of Europe in behalf of the Jewish Nation.....With a Word to Mr. Hobhouse, the Representative for Westminster.....And a Hint to Mr. Elliston of Drury-Lane Theatre.

Giovedi grasso, Shrove Thursday, was a remarkable day at Venice, for the exercise of many popular amusements. The most attractive was, "Il volo dal Campanile di San Marco." It was performed in the following manner. An immense cable was fastened to the top of the steeple, which was let down the whole of its length, until it reached the pavement. Both of its extremities being made secure, a man, who was paid for the occasion, after a small cord had been fastened round one of his wrists and another round one of his ancles, would slide down from the topmost extremity to the ground,

bearing a small flag in his hand; to the great delight and astonishment of the numerous spectators. To the "Volo dal Campanile," Captain Manby is indebted for his contrivance for saving the lives of shipwrecked mariners; only he has added thereto a basket, or cradle, in which a man is placed, and propelled forward, like the Venetian flyer of the Giovedì grasso.

The moveable pyramids and Moresco broad-sword amusements were performed by the Niccolotti and the Castellani, two parties who took their names from the parishes in which they were born. The inhabitants of the said parishes were always, once a-year, opposed to one another in the performance of sundry feats of strength, on two different platforms, erected at a certain distance opposite each other. At the success or failure of any of their evolutions, violent applauses or hissings were vociferated by the friends of one party, to the annoyance of the other.

The amusements, or games, consisted in forming pyramids of twenty or thirty men, piled one upon another, beginning with three or four, and increasing the number, according to the figure intended to be exhibited; sometimes beginning with the greater number, and diminishing in size, to a considerable height, until

the whole terminated with a child, who would climb from one man's shoulder to another, until he had reached the top. When this amusement was over, another would commence. It was called "il giuoco Moresco," and was a sort of attack between the parties with the broadsword.

These diversions for the lower orders generally took place while the patricians were rusticating at their delicious villas, on the banks of the Brenta or elsewhere, in all the luxury of eastern splendour.

In imitation of the Romans, it was the uniform policy of the Venetians to keep alive a party-spirit between their subjects, and to ply them with amusements, that they might have no leisure for reflection. But in latter times, Venice has, in fact, possessed a numerous population, but no *canaglìa ;* and divided bodies are ever the most easy to govern, and the surest to be conquered. Subtraction is a favourite rule in the arithmetic of politicians, and all governments are tolerably perfect in their practice of it. The policy that unfortunately is so prevalent on the Continent, appears to be a close imitation of the doctrines of the Florentine Secretary, Machiavelli, who says, "With respect to the means of holding in subjection states

once accustomed to be governed by their own laws—destroy them, especially the nobles and the men of power; as they can never forget what they have been, and seldom or ever forgive those who have been the cause of their privations."

Though Venice produces nothing, no city in Europe is more abundantly or more luxuriously supplied with the necessaries as well as the delicacies of life. People often come to Venice from the Terra Firma, to enjoy fruit in the highest perfection. As it is brought thither by water carriage, it is not liable to be softened or bruised, and the beautiful bloom is thereby preserved as if it were still on the tree.

The Venetian poultry, too, is generally of excellent flavour. The fish also, which come from the sea to fatten themselves in the rich lakes that surround the city, are larger and better flavoured than in any other sea-port. The oysters of the Arsenal were an article of considerable profit to the persons engaged in raising them, and were the largest and best-tasted in theworld.

As I have touched on the subject of eatables, I shall, for the instruction as well as consolation of our English *gourmands*, who may be thinking of paying a visit to Italy, here give them a

slight foretaste of the delicacies for which its principal towns and cities are most celebrated.

Piedmont is famous for producing the best rice in the peninsula, and for its truffles, which are dug out of the earth by dogs trained for the occasion, and of a peculiar breed.

Milan is the only place for the delicious mascaron, made of fresh cream in little round pats, about the size of half a pound of butter. The Stracchin cheese is of a square form; it weighs about six or eight pounds, and is made entirely of rich cream.

Lodi and Orio are the only parts of Italy that produce the real Parmasan, though it is made in many other provinces. It takes its name from Parma being at one time the principal deposit for the wholesale consumption of it; but not one of these famous cheeses was ever made in that town.

At Bergamo are manufactured the best sugar-plums, and what is called la mustarda, which consists of a variety of rich fruits preserved in jars, with a mixture of clarified sugar and mustard. At the time of the Carnival it produces a considerable profit to the dealers therein, as it is sent all over Italy; as well as a paste made of almonds and sugar, called mandolata.

Brescia is famous for a kind of very fat small

bird, called gl'uccelli dei Ronchi, and for its polenta, or Indian corn. Verona, Este, and Monselice are distinguished for the finest fruits of all kinds, and the salame col aglio, which are large sausages stuffed with garlick. Vicenza is unrivalled for its grapes and sweet wines, which are of a flavour different from that of the wines of all the other parts of Italy.

At Padua are made the famous osso callo and fuccacie, which resemble the buns that are cut to make rusks of, but infinitely superior, and especially at Easter. Genoa formerly derived considerable advantage from the sale of its excellent zucca candida, its pumkins, its preserved citrons, its large and small pastry of all descriptions, and its candied sweetmeats, dried mushrooms, and vegetables.

Parma and Modena are celebrated for their small hams, of a most delicious flavour. They are cut into slices almost as thin as wafers, and packed in boxes; and, together with their zampini, a pig's leg with the bone taken out and stuffed with exquisite sausages, once formed a considerable portion of a not inactive commerce, and were sent by the Ducal family, as presents to the several Continental courts.

Bologna is the only place in Italy for what are called the bandola investita, and for all

kinds of sausages ; Florence for its perfumery, and, like Lucca, for its oils and rosoglias of herbs, which are exported to all parts of Europe; Rome for its wild and water fowls, its vegetables, and in particular for its brocoli ; Naples for its incomparable mustacciuli, its maccaroni, and its cascia cavallo, a famous cheese used therewith, when not cooked with sughilio, the extract of stewed beef in wine, with all kinds of spices and herbs. The ices of Naples are superior to those of any other part of Italy.

The plate-glass manufactory on the island of Murano, at the distance of about a mile from Venice, is perhaps one of the finest in all Europe ; though, like every thing else on the Venetian territory, excepting despotism, it is greatly on the decline. Certain secrets with respect to glass-making were confined to the Venetians. The substance that is to form the mirror, of a certain size, is taken out of the furnace by means of a machine with a wooden handle, and the workmen keep turning it round with the greatest velocity, until it has attained the desired length ; when, with an immense pair of scissors, they cut asunder the fiery substance, and instantly roll it on stone, where it congeals, and becomes the most perfect of its kind. The Venetians were also the first who in-

vented the several kinds of glass beads, of various colours and shapes; and those which they now manufacture, and which are worked into purses, bags, necklaces, and other ornaments, are still the best in all Europe.

Burrano was famous for the Venetian point lace; from which place Louis the Fourteenth seduced a number of the workmen to France, where he established the first lace manufactory. In the same manner, Charles the Fifth established a similar manufactory at Brussels and elsewhere.

Was not the very first vessel of war that carried a cannon, of Venetian origin? Venice was the parent of other maritime states; and, to such a pitch of perfection had she arrived, that the dresses, the manners, and the customs of her inhabitants were adopted by the rest of Europe, long before the reign of Queen Elizabeth. A slight reference to the plays of the immortal Shakespeare, will convince the reader, that that great master of the passions and profound judge of human nature, was accustomed to consider the Venetians, as they were represented in the portraits of Titian and others, to be models of elegance in dress; the men wearing their beards, and the women their brocades, bracelets, &c. He repeatedly compliments the

Venetians; and, in "Love's Labour Lost," makes one of his characters exclaim

"Ah, good old Mantuan!
I may speak of thee as the traveller doth of Venice;
Venegia, Venegia,
Chi non te vide, ei non te pregia."

that is, "O Venice, Venice, he who has never seen thee, has thee not in esteem."

The circumstance of the corps diplomatique being interdicted from every kind of intercourse with the patricians and the Government, except on public occasions, in consequence of the conspiracy against the Republic formed by the Marquis of Bedmar, ambassador from the court of France, in conjunction with the Duke d'Ossuno and the Spanish governor of the Milanese, suggested the story of Otway's Venice Preserved.

An amazing number of merchants of all nations settled themselves at Venice, and were tolerated in the enjoyment of their different religions, and protected in the free exercise of them. There was a quarter for the Germans, and another for the Turks, who were not permitted to be seen out of their habitations after sunset. The number of libraries, printing-offices, and of booksellers' shops at Venice ex-

ceeded that of any other city of Italy. The communication, by means of canals, with most of the large rivers of the Terra Firma, gave the greatest facilities to every kind of commerce. In short, no foreigner possessing genius and industry could leave Venice but with regret. For years after he had quitted that city, Cardinal de Bernis was accustomed to speak of the spot, and of its inhabitants, with the greatest warmth of delight.

When the Lombards and the Jews ceased to have the advantage of the Venetian navigation, they emigrated, with their immense riches, to England; and, to the rich bankers who laid out their vast capitals in building, is London indebted for the well known street which has ever since born their name.

The Jews who remained at Venice set about repairing their losses, by becoming money-lenders to all the sovereigns of Europe; and, from the enormous profits which they derived from the interest they exacted, were they enabled to build the Ghetto, a place of residence exclusively appropriated for the Israelitish tribe, situate near the canal Regio; and the gates of which, after sunset, were closed, and not a soul was suffered to enter or go out. In this part of the city they were compelled to

reside, until the revolution took place in 1796. It formed a little town of itself, and as the Venetian nobility declined, commerce became almost entirely confined to that quarter. The Lombards were, to the full, as usuriously inclined as the sons of Israel were. The rate of interest to be taken on their loans and money transactions was regulated by the tribunal of the *Pioveggi*.

Let me here digress for a moment, and offer a word or two in behalf of the much vilified and much despised Jewish nation. In an age like the present, teeming with benevolent projects of all descriptions, and overflowing with the milk and honey of universal philanthropy, surely it behoves the several governments of the civilized world to take the condition of this most remarkable people into their serious consideration, and, together with the other restrictions imposed on them, to do away with the harsh, as well as impolitic law which prevents a Hebrew from possessing landed property, by which he becomes of course exempted from certain contributions towards the expenses of the state, paid by all other classes of his Majesty's subjects. Many of these Jews, as we all know, are excellent members of society, and deserve to be set free from those disgraceful

shackles, which were thought neccessary in the early ages of Christianity.

I have been credibly informed, that all the tribes feel the privations to which they are subjected most poignantly. Ought we then to be surprised, if we sometimes find them immolating on the altar of avarice, those miserable Christians who resort to them for loans in the hour of distress, and exclaiming, in the language of Shylock, with feelings partaking less of remorse, than of fell revenge?

"I am a Jew: and, hath not a Jew eyes? hath not a Jew hands? organs, dimensions, senses, affections, passions? fed with the same food, hurt with the same weapons, subject to the same diseases, healed by the same means, warmed and cooled by the same winter and summer, as a Christian is? If you prick us, do we not bleed? if you tickle us, do we not laugh? if you poison us, do we not die? and if you wrong us, shall we not revenge? If we are like you in the rest, we will resemble you in that. If a Jew wrong a Christian, what is his humility? revenge: If a Christian wrong a Jew, what should his sufferance be by Christian example? why, revenge. The villainy you teach me, I will execute; and it shall go hard, but I will better the instruction."

Satisfied I am, that until a complete and entire amalgamation of the two parties shall have been effected, the mutual interest of Christian and Jew will not have been placed on its proper basis.

Formerly, the kings of England were accustomed to look upon the descendants of Abraham as their property; indeed, they were expressly called the king's "chattels." So strong did the popular tide run against them, that in the year 1348, when a fatal endemic distemper raged in a great portion of Europe, it was given out that they had poisoned the springs and wells: in consequence of which, a million and a half of them were cruelly massacred. Again, in the year 1492, half a million of them were driven out of Spain, and one hundred and fifty thousand out of Portugal. In short, they were every where persecuted, and most rigorously treated.

In Spain, many of them were actually burnt alive, and their sufferings became a source of amusement to the people. The satirical Doctor Swift, in his celebrated Drapier's Letters, tells a story of a Jew at Madrid, who being condemned to the fire on account of his religion, a crowd of school-boys following him to the stake, and apprehending they might lose their sport if he should happen to recant, would, from time to time, clap him on the back, and cry, "*Sta firme, Moyse;*" that is—"Moses, continue stedfast."

If my memory does not fail me, Mr. Hobhouse, one of the representatives for Westminster, the most enlightened city in the empire, signified, some time ago, his determination to bring the case of this oppressed people fairly before the British Parliament. Most earnestly do I hope that this active senator will persevere in his intention; and happy, thrice happy shall I be, if the present intimation should have a tendency, however trifling, to spur him on to a perseverance in his praiseworthy design. His unwearied endeavours to procure for us the light of heaven, untaxed, are duly appreciated by his countrymen; and I will add, by his countrywomen also: and Mr. Hobhouse may rest assured, that an endeavour to dispel the *mental darkness* which has been engendered by that "sufferance," which, for so many ages, has been "the badge of all the tribe," will be considered no less laudable.

That he will be seconded in his efforts by all those members who uniformly advocate the cause of free discussion and of universal toleration, I cannot, for one moment, doubt. Guessing from their patronymics, several of our senators cannot be far removed in blood from the oppressed race: to suppose, therefore, that *they* would not joyfully step forward, and afford the

representative for Westminster their cordial support, would be to suppose them possessed by the marble-hearted fiend, Ingratitude; which, when it shows itself in a child, has been pronounced "more hideous than the sea-monster."

But, while the Senate shall be thus actively occupied in the cause of the sons of Israel, ought not the Stage to step forward, and lend its powerful aid towards the accomplishment of the *alta impresa?* To this end, I beg leave, strenuously to recommend to Mr. Elliston, the spirited lessee of Drury Lane Theatre, a revival of the late Mr. Cumberland's admirable comedy of "The Jew." The play was eminently successful, at a time by no means so favourable for the inculcation of the principles I am laying down as the present. In the hands of that chastest of all performers, Mr. Dowton, Sheva would find as able a representative as Doctor Cantwell has done. Liston, too—the laugh-inspiring Liston—in the part of Jabal, the Jew's servant, would delight the town not less than he has done in Mawworm. To heighten the attraction, songs, according to the custom of the day, might be introduced with considerable effect. The part of Frederick might be allotted to Braham; while Eliza Radcliffe would find an interesting representative in the sweet warbler Stephens.

Thus, instead of receiving our impressions of the whole tribe, from "the Jew which Shakespeare drew,"—brutal, vindictive, uncharitable, extortionate, his bags running over with the spoils of usury, and his veins glutted with the blood of prodigals, gamesters, and unfortunate merchants, we should constantly have before our eyes, the generous Hebrew of Cumberland,—the widow's friend, the orphan's father, the poor man's protector, and the universal philanthropist; who "neither buries his riches in a synagogue or any other pile, nor wastes it upon vanity or public works; but who leaves it to a charitable heir, and builds his hospital in the human heart." Thus would the stray sheep of the scattered flock of Abraham at length have fair play; and, that such an appeal to the kind feelings, the good sense, and the strict justice of Englishmen, would be made in vain, is, I think, impossible—

> "In hearts like theirs', there will be found a place,
> For ev'ry victim of unjust disgrace."

CHAPTER XXIII.

VENICE.

State of Commerce and Manufactures during the Republic..... The Patricians indirectly engaged therein.....Venetian Festivals.....Ceremony of the Marriage of the Doge with the Adriatic.....The Bucentoro.....The Villegiatura..... Mode of Living of the Venetian Ladies of the Haut-ton .....Madame Benzona.....Albrizzi Teutocchi.....Cecilia Tron.....Eugenia Tron.....Chiaretta Contarini.....Giustina Venier Micheli.

MANY of the noble Venetians were accustomed to advance money for carrying on the commerce of the Republic, and were indirectly connected with the merchants of the Terra Firma. At Verona, Padua, and Vicenza, there were considerable manufactories of silks, gauzes, ribbons, artificial flowers, and whalebone : there were also cloth manufactures at Schio, and other places in the territories of the Republic. At Venice, too, the same manufactures were carried on, but in still greater variety ; such as rich damasks, brocades, gold and silver tissues, and velvets. The gold chains of Venice, with its gold lace and trimmings, were the admiration of all Europe. The city was also celebrated

for its wax, and cream of tartar; for its glass and pearl beads; for its silk stockings and lace; and particularly for its scarlet cloth and snuffs. The triacca manufactured at Venice, is used as a general medicine; it is composed of various drugs, and is considered to be an antidote against the sting of venomous reptiles. Many of the above articles were at one time a source of considerable profit to the ambassadors, consuls, and other agents of the Republic, at the several foreign courts, on account of their great superiority over those of other nations.

Its numerous festivals rendered Venice one of the most interesting cities in the universe. Amongst others, there were those of Santa Marta, San Rocco, il Redentore, la Saluta, San Marco, Corpus Domine, and the Assenzione; on the latter of which days the Doge used to go to Lido, a small island two miles from Venice, near the entrance of the Adriatic, for the purpose of espousing that sea, in the Bucentoro, a vessel somewhat resembling the ancient Greek and Roman gallies. It was richly carved, and covered with fine gold in basso-relievo, lined with the richest crimson silk velvet, trimmed with gold fringe and tassels, and furnished in the most elegant and costly manner, with beautiful Venetian mirrors, crystal cut ornaments,

large pier glass windows, with Venetian blinds and crimson silk curtains. It used to be towed out by a number of the barcajuoli, richly dressed in the ancient Venetian costume, with caps and sashes of different colours, all bearing the Doge's livery. The Doge was habited in his ducal robes, his coronet, and the other insignia of his high office. The whole body of the senators, with their wives and families, magnificently attired, joined the procession in gondolas, together with all the foreign ministers, and often a hundred thousand persons, coming not only from the Terra Firma, but from the extremity of Italy, and even of Europe; so that the water, from the ducal palace of the Piazzetta to Lido, was actually covered with boats, filled with youth and beauty in all their most seductive shapes and appearances, forming an entire carpet of boats of all descriptions; besides peottis, in the shape of ancient temples and triumphal cars, representing the courts of Jupiter, Venus, Mars, Bacchus, Apollo, together with Neptune, and the rest of the marine deities; so that it was scarcely possible to discover a foot of water.

The ceremony was called the marriage of the sea. The Doge, on his arrival at the mouth of the harbour, came on deck, and being sur-

rounded by the senate, he took from his finger a gold ring, and throwing it into the sea, he pronounced these words, "*Disponsamus te, Mare! in signum veri perpetuique dominii;*" that is, "We espouse thee, O sea! in token of real and perpetual dominion."

The Doge and senate then returned in the same order to the ducal palace, where a sumptuous banquet was prepared, consisting of all the delicacies of the season; and at the close of which each senator was presented with a large tray, or basket, filled with the choicest fruits and sweetmeats, to take home to his family. This was indeed a day of festivity and triumph for the Venetians, and turned out highly lucrative to all classes of the inhabitants.

The famous ducal barge of which I have spoken, the Bucentoro, which, as its name implies, was capable of containing two hundred persons, was destroyed by the French for the sake of its gold, and chopped in pieces, together with four-and-twenty ships of war in the arsenal. Nay, the very arsenal itself was nearly demolished by those modern liberators. It was wittily observed by one of the barcajuoli to his comrades, "I Francese non sono tutti ladri, ma *Buona-parte!*" The French also destroyed the famous beds of oysters which were formerly

in the arsenal, and which were esteemed the largest and finest flavoured in Europe.

After the festivities of the Ascension the Venetians commenced their villegiatura, or rural diversions, on both sides of the banks of the Brenta; which, for the space of one-and-twenty miles, as far as Padua, are ornamented with numerous beautiful palaces, built by Palladio and Sansovino, and the fronts of many of which were painted by Paul Veronese. These palaces are the villas of the patricians and of the rich merchants.

The country along the Brenta is really a terrestrial paradise. In my opinion, there is no spot of the globe that can be placed in comparison with it. The meadows and gardens all around are highly cultivated and fertile, and terminate most agreeably. What is very extraordinary, no two of the palaces are alike. Most of them have their fronts looking towards the river. I did not, however, recognize in the Brenta, so readily as Mr. Addison seems to have done, the Timavus—

" *Unde per ora novem vasto cum murmure montis,*
It mare proruptum, et pelago premit arva sonanti;"

though Virgil adds,

" *Hic tamen ille urbem Patavî sedesque locavit*
Teucrorum."

The mode of living during the villegiatura, was exactly the same as at Venice. The ladies never rose till the middle of the day. After breakfast they put on their morning dress, and either walked or rode out: they would then come home, and after taking the bath, dress for dinner; at five they would take coffee, sleep till seven or eight, prepare for the evening parties, which continued till about midnight, and then go to the casinos to play at cards, or for the sake of the conversazione; and at about two or three in the morning, and sometimes later, they would return home to rest.

The opera at Venice did not commence till between nine and ten, and was seldom over before two or three in the morning; but no lady of rank would even then think of going home, before she had taken a few hands at the casino. On some mornings they would visit the Erberia, to see the delightful fruits and flowers brought to the market from the Terra Firma, and then they would go home to bed.

The Benzona, the Albrizzi Teutocchi, the Giustina Micheli, the Tron, the Cavaliera Contarini, the Labbia, the Pesaro, and in short all the ladies of the haut-ton, would not, when young, have thought of shewing themselves in society before midnight. But now, alas! they

are all the worse for the wear; and though they still adhere to the old proverb, that "women and linen look to the greatest advantage by candle-light," and though tight lacing and long waisted stays will go a good way towards hiding much superabundant substance, the ill-natured old gentleman with his scythe, however much the diurnal supply of blooming roses and of fresh lilies may put new faces on old bodies, is constantly holding up his hour-glass, and intimating that he has little or no respect for a figure of 6 with an 0 after it.

It may, however, be laid down as a maxim, that women are as old as they look, and men as old as they feel. Old women, like old guineas, are worth their weight in gold. Madame Tron was once very much offended with a gentleman who asked her how old she was? "I never give myself the trouble," replied she, "to think about my enemies."—"Well," said the gentleman, "we were children together, and I am seventy."—"What's that to me?" rejoined Madame Tron.—"Yes, but you have a daughter who is between forty and fifty."—"And pray, Mr. Busybody, what has the age of my daughter to do with mine? Thank God," said she, "the Libro d'Oro is destroyed," (which was the register of the ages of all the patri-

cians); "at least we have gained that by the revolution; there is no more prying into the secret of a woman's age, Mr. Inquisitive!"

The palace of Madame Benzona, on the grand canal, near San Benedetto, together with the distinguished beauty and the great merits of this Venetian matron, though so often sung and so universally admired, ought not to be passed over in silence, in a work professing to contain anecdotes of a city, in which, from her amiable and polished manners, she has shone forth so pre-eminently.

The mansion of this celebrated lady, though she is now in very slender circumstances, continues to be visited by the natives, as well as by foreigners of the first distinction. Her name stands high on the annals of gallantry, both for her extraordinary condescension, and for her easy and indiscriminate compliance, from the prince down to the barcajuolo. The prop of her house is said to be the Cavalier Giuseppe Trevis, a rich Jew merchant. Being of a very tolerant disposition, persons of all religions as well as nations, are received by her on terms of equal hospitality and good breeding. Her house is also visited by Pindemonte Lamberti, the translator of Homer, and by other men of genius; though she has recently been excluded

the society of the court *converzatione*, in consequence of German etiquette, whereby blood only constitutes merit, and merit without blood is considered, like a race-horse, as having no merit at all.

Madame Abrizzi Tuetocchi was first married to the poor Bernabotti Marini. Finding it more convenient, after having had a son by her rich cavalier servante, to become the wife of Albrizzi, the father of this lady, in furtherance of her views (though she had been married nearly twenty years, and had had a son by her husband, who is a father of a family), came forward to declare that he had violated his daughter's inclinations; by which declaration alone a catholic marriage can be dissolved. The father was nearly eighty years of age when his scruples of conscience induced him to be the ostensible person thus to administer to his daughter's good fortune. The husband Marini, the husband Albrizzi, the two sons, and the good lady, all live together in a state of the most profound miscellaneous harmony. She is a Greek; is ambitious in her friendships; a profound calculator; and in every thing an extraordinary woman.

Zorzetto Ricchi, the husband of the well-known Cecilia Tron, is a native of Corfu. He

is an able politician; has been an advocate for democracy as well as for imperialism; and would become the meanest slave of Ali Pacha, for the sake of promotion and personal interest. No man sympathizes more in the successes of the weather-cock politicians of the day than Zorzetto does: for he runs no risk, and is sure to find that which he has not lost! Whenever he happens to be pushed for the needful, the Greek artfully invents some story of illness, or of hair-breadth scapes from jeopardy, to soften the feelings of his better half. Promises of certain domestic duties towards her, and better behaviour for the future, generally end in softening the heart of the old lady. He does not live with her, but occupies the magnificent Palazzo-Tron, on the grand canal. The lady lives in private lodgings at Padua, where she is visited by her husband as often as his pecuniary necessities call him thither.

Eugenia Tron, the wife of the Bernabotti Giovanni Veronese, better known by the nick-name of *bocca storta*, crook-mouthed, is a lady of some vivacity in repartee. Though disgustingly ugly in the face, she possesses a remarkably fine figure. Being at a masked ball during carnival time, she was one night much followed, and particularly by a gentleman who was then

paying his addresses to the beautiful Cavaliera Donado, known by the name of "la bella Veneziana." Having discovered whom he was following, she cried out to him, "Lasciatela, è la bocca storta;" "leave her, it is the crook-mouthed lady." Hearing this, Eugenia Tron instantly replied, "è vero che son brutta di viso ma egli sà che tengo un paradiso." And most assuredly she must have had some very powerful hidden charms; for some of the handsomest young men in all Venice paid their assiduous court to her. Ludovico Priuli, M. A. Giustingan, Tommassini, and many other elegant and fashionable men of rank, were constantly amongst the number of her admirers. She possessed a liberal, a generous, and a noble soul: even when reduced in her circumstances, she preferred living in a miserably obscure retirement, rather than become chargeable to her friends and former admirers. She has since retired to Corfu, where she possesses a baronia.

Chiaretta Contarini was a perfect beauty, but a thorough-paced dunce. Though illiterate to a degree, she had a furious craving after the treasures of science. When at the public assemblies, or at the coffee-shops, she would call for "*un bicchier d'acqua corrotta,*" which means

a glass of water in mourning; instead of "*un bicchier d'acqua corretta,*" a glass of water corrected, by having a little aniseed put into it; which is a common beverage at Venice, simple water being in that country considered very unwholesome. She would also say she was going to the "*vigillatura,*" instead of "*villegiatura,*" and make a thousand blunders of the same kind. On one of her favourites, a French officer, being taken ill, she asked him to let her feel his pulse; but, unfortunately, instead of saying "*laissez moi tater votre pouls,*" she said, "*laissez moi tater votre qu—.*" The officer said, it was not the custom in France, and politely begged to decline the proffered civility. Her little casino resembled a large sea-port town, and was open to bales of all descriptions, on payment of the transit duties. In the list of her numerous admirers, some of them men of talent, were Bianchi, and Carlo Pino, a Milanese, and brother of the general of that name. He was appointed by the Austrian Government at Venice, to be one of the justices; as if there were not among the Venetians men capable of filling the situation! Family intrigue procured him the place, and petticoat interest supported it. His brother, the general, being of the French

party, each of them took different sides, resolved to adhere to the one which should be the most successful.

Both Bianchi and Carlo Pino lived with Chiaretta in the same house. No ridiculous jealousies interrupted the harmony which subsisted between the lawyer and the justice; provided they shared in the spoils, they cared not "if the general camp, pioneers and all, had tasted her sweet body." They were too liberal-minded to think of monopolizing so much beauty and virtue; and therefore left the lady to increase an influence, which, in the end, turned out to the profit of the trio.

Chiaretta Contarini had three husbands, all living at the same time. The first was Dofiln, who, being poor, was either expelled or bought off by Grimani, a younger son of the family of that name. He was succeeded by the potent Contarini; whom, however, Chiaretta survived, and she now resides at Milan. Being by nature yielding, liberal of her favours, and tolerant in her principles, men of all nations and religions are received by her with open arms. No woman was ever more calculated to shine in a revolution than Chiaretta Contarini. She was a Turk with the Musselmen, a Jewess with the sons of Israel, a Protestant with the Reformists, and a Catholic

from hypocrisy, convenience, and interest. She strived hard to get hold of some rich Jew of the Ghetto, and endeavoured to rival Marina Benzona in the good graces of the Cavalier Trevis; but the fidelity of the Israelite remained unshaken.

As soon as the above-mentioned Carlo Pino found the power of Buonaparte in Italy firmly established, he quitted the Austrian service at Venice, and repaired to his native home, to live with his long neglected wife and family. His brother, the general, being the war-minister, soon got him employed at Milan; but having taken French leave of Chiaretta, and having given her, in an unguarded moment, a personal security of some magnitude, she soon followed him to enforce the payment of it. Not being able to comply therewith, and Chiaretta having, besides her pension of two livres a-day, collected together a small annuity, he persuaded her to take up her abode at Milan; where, though advanced in years, she still continues to receive company; and where her conversation continues to be the same strange melange of blunder, wit, and detraction, that it was wont to be in her youthful days.

Madame Giustina Venier, the wife of Mark Anthony Micheli, is a lady who has, with the

assistance of her English friends, translated some of Shakespeare's plays. She has also lately written a little book, called "Feste Veneziane," in the composition of which she has resorted too much to her inventive faculties, and has trusted more to the brilliancy of her imagination than to the truth of history. She is a gay and lovely dame, and was, for a long time, the *chère amie* of an English gentleman of the name of Parr. She was formerly a very interesting little figure, and had a most engaging countenance; but so negligent was she of her person, and so filthy in her dress, that she was more fitted to be the companion of Diogenes than of a well-bred Englishman. To her unpardonable neglect in these matters was this lively little creature indebted for the loss of her paramour; who parted with her for one who was as ugly as sin, and who had no earthly virtue but the one in which his former Dulcinea was so deficient. This circumstance, added to the loss of hearing, have so changed her former character, that most of her intimate friends and acquaintances have forsaken her; and, in consequence thereof, she has followed the wise conduct of many a female, who, finding herself neglected by her lovers, returns to the embraces of her husband. From the very habit of attach-

ment, some of these southern ladies, when they can find no one to love or be loved by, turn religious bigots, and, for the mere want of earthly objects of enjoyment, transfer their affections to God and the Church, make a merit of necessity, and die with the reputation of being Saints! To such elderly dames may be applied what Pope says of Narcissa:—

> "A very heathen in the carnal part,
> Yet still a sad, good Christian at her heart."

Marina Benzona was the only Venetian lady who had the honour of being visited by the late Queen Caroline of England; to whom, and to her suite, Marina gave an evening's entertainment. She is now married to her long attached cavalier servante, Giuseppe Rangoni, created by Buonaparte a knight of the Corona di Ferro and Legion d'Onore. He is a gentleman of merit and talent, and was *ami de la maison*, during the life-time of the husband.

CHAPTER XXIV.

VENICE.

Venice once the Seat of Music.....Pacchierotti.....Marchesi .....Hints for the Preservation of the Voice.....Rubinelli .....Madame Mara.....Conduct of the Proprietors of the Fenice towards a certain "Great Lady in the Little Parlour."..... Anecdotes of Mrs. Billington.

VENICE was, at one time, the seat of music, and had established her *conservatoires* long before any other country had done so. The Mendicanti, and the Zitelle, and the Ospidaletto, were as famous for vocal as for instrumental performers. Their masters were the celebrated Bertoni, Bianchi, and Mayer; and, in the Lent season, the oratorios were as well executed and as numerously attended, as those of any other city in Europe.

None of the natives of Italy have a more refined musical taste than the Venetians. Pacchierotti, with all his defects, was enchanting, whenever he happened to sing in tune, as he always addressed himself to the heart; while Marchesi, with ten times his ability and natural gifts, often disgusted, in consequence of his

deviations from that nature, the want of which Pacchierotti contrived to supply, by a refinement of art, which no other singer, male or female, has hitherto been able to attain.

His habit of singing below pitch did not arise from want of ear, or of musical science, but from excessive sensibility, whereby his metaphysical powers often got the better of his physical—a circumstance which is rarely or never the case with the musical professors of the north, who, in general, sing in too sharp a key, from their want of ear as well as of feeling. It is certainly most desirable to be perfectly in tune; but the singing in too flat a key depends on numerous physical causes, which produce the effect of imperfect intonation, and proceeds not uncommonly from weakness of the lungs or chest. In short, the human voice is of so delicate a nature, that every trifling thing that militates against the health is prejudicial to it. It is the height of folly in singers to fancy that the use of one particular liquid can be more serviceable than the use of another. Nothing on earth will preserve the voice; though the abuse of any thing may tend greatly to destroy it. A regular course of diet, accompanied with moderate exercise, is all that is required. It is, however, what few persons who have attained any

celebrity in that elegant and most fascinating science, sufficiently attend to.

It seems, indeed, as if nature had bestowed this valuable gift on the most abject of her creatures. The moment those miserable beings, who may be said to belong to neither gender, and whom I know not under what description of animals to classify—the moment they are pronounced duly qualified, they are taught music, though ignorant of every other social accomplishment. In that science they become proficients; but, in every thing else these *castrati* gentlemen are little better than brutes. It is, however, a well attested fact, that Mrs. Conway, the Princess Albani, Annetta Brignole, Chiaretta Contarini, the Grassini, and many other females, were prodigiously attached to Marchesi. The crime, however, carries its own punishment along with it!

Deprived, in early life, of the advantages of a liberal education, the animals of which I have been speaking, the moment good fortune calls them into public notice, puffed up by the applauses lavished on their superficial capacities, are found deficient of those principles and those virtues, by which every other class of human beings is distinguished. There is, however, no rule without an exception. Some

few of them have been found who were capable of reading their parts; especially the children of professional parents, who had taught them at least the science of music, whereby they have been enabled to secure to themselves a comfortable subsistence in their old age.

Pacchierotti was one of the best educated singers in all Italy, and had associated in early life with men of letters. Rubinelli had good natural abilities, and was very grateful to the English, for the encouragement he met with while in this country. Aprilli was quite the gentleman in public society, except when he spoke on music, and thereby instantly discovered himself to be of the neuter gender. Crescentini, who was a close imitator of Pacchierotti, was also an excellent *musico*. Senesino and Damiani, who ranked amongst the second class of these beings, always sang in tune, and with infinitely more judgment than Marchesi; who, for the sake of a *roulade*, would sacrifice the finest poetical sentiment of the great Metastasio. Crescentini is also said to have been very liberal. He made the Grassini a present of a valuable diamond ring, when she sang with him at Venice, in the opera of the Orazii and Curiazzii; and it is reported that it was in consequence of some such weighty rea-

son, that she was induced to interest herself with Napoleon, to give him the order of the Iron Cross.

In one style of singing Madame Mara, and in another Mrs. Billington, not only excelled all who had gone before them, but every one of their contemporaries, as well as every one who has come after them. As our English favourite, poor Mrs. Bland, once justly observed, "they are all mere school-girls to them."

Being one night at Mr. Bochsa's oratorios, and hearing one of the present race of singers execute some of her favourite songs, Madame Mara was asked by a friend who was sitting with her in the same box, what she thought of her? "She dances a tolerably good fandango," was her answer; and it was, I think, as severe a slap at the judgment of the audience, and at the mediocrity of the singer, as can be well conceived.

There is a certain Italian female, possessing, undoubtedly, some pretensions to natural abilities, who had the good fortune to come to England when the two great singers I have just mentioned, were on the decline, and when the war left her field-marshal of the musical forces. The French say, that "Madame bat les œufs, et Monsieur son epoux fait l'omelette:" and this is

certainly true; for no pastry-cook ever made more puffs, or paid more for newspaper panegyrics than this "great lady in the little parlour" has done. When last in Italy, she used to make a boast, that his present Majesty, when Prince Regent, would take her under his arm, and conduct her to the tea-parties of his mother, the late Queen Charlotte, and those of his sisters, the Princesses. The royal family of Bavaria were not, however, quite so condescending to this companion of English royalty; for they gave directions that the lady, bedizened with diamonds, as well as her husband, Signor Bragone, should be turned out of a box, which, in her presumption, she had taken possession of, a little too near to the one occupied by the royal family. For this mortification of her vanity she has only herself to blame; since, both the King and Queen of Bavaria are distinguished for their affability and kindness towards all professional persons—provided those persons keep their proper places.

This singer lost an engagement at the theatre of the Fenice at Venice for the present Carnival, in consequence of a trifling mistake which her French husband made in his calculations. Fancying that if his spouse was engaged to sing at Venice, all the post horses on the high-roads

leading to that city would be in a state of requisition, for the purpose of conveying the different sovereigns of Europe, and the treasures that would be expended at the theatre on the occasion, modestly proposed to the managers, that they should share the same with his wife, half and half. The question was put to the vote; when, out of the fifty proprietors of the theatre at Venice, eight-and-forty black-balled the Frenchman's impudent proposition—thereby inflicting a just punishment on inordinate presumption!

I have too great a reverence for the works of the Supreme Being not to esteem merit, in whatever shape it presents itself; but I must say, that I think that that merit loses much of its charm, when it is found united to vanity and avarice.

Justice, however, compels me to declare, that this singer, like some of our own admired actresses, is untainted in her private character. But, the pride of some of the musical foreigners, who pay their visits to John Bull, ought to be humbled; and especially the pride of this lady, whose star has certainly shone more propitiously in this our northern climate, than it ever did in her own, or in any other country.

How different in disposition, and, alas, in conduct, was our incomparable warbler Mrs. Billington! As the following anecdotes of this celebrated singer convey, to my mind, a not uninstructive lesson to such of my fair countrywomen as may be in possession of this most fascinating, as well as most dangerous, of all God's gifts, when unaccompanied by good conduct, I shall introduce them into the present chapter.

Mrs. Billington came to Naples in the year 1794, accompanied by her husband, a double-bass player, and her brother Charles Weischell, the famous performer on the violin. She was soon engaged to sing at the theatre San Carlo; and on her account Signor Bianchi was instructed to set to music the opera of Ines di Castro; into which, in consequence of her defective memory, she instructed him to introduce a favourite song, which she had for years been giving in London, composed by Salicri. Bianchi complied with her request, but added thereto a few bars and three cadenzas, in order that she might change them in the course of the opera; Cimarosa also wrote three; the German composer, Hermil, added three more; while Marescalche, one of the orchestra, and a music seller, likewise contri-

buted three; making up amongst them a round dozen, all of them obligatos, which she was to sing, accompanied by her brother the violinist.

It will scarcely be credited, that this most skilful singer possessed so little nature and so much science, that she actually began the Carnival with the first cadenza, and ended it, without varying a note during the whole time. Whatever she had determined on doing, she executed to the greatest perfection; but in point of genius, and at variations, or at an impromptu, she was a mere dunce, and, in every respect, what the Italians call *una testa dura*.

Mrs. Billington had not been long at Naples before she attracted the attention of princes, dukes, barons, counts, and commoners. Her amazing musical powers, with her great personal charms, and the facility with which those charms were yielded up, and perhaps for the first time opposed by her hitherto complaisant husband, gave birth to a rumour of his having been carried off by poison. The occasion of it was this.

On the second day of her first engagement at the theatre San Carlo, after she and Mr. Billington had been dining with an English family who were lodging in the same hotel, he went up stairs to fetch the cloak in which she was

about to go to the theatre, when, while in the act of putting it on her shoulders, without uttering a syllable, he dropped down at her feet, and expired!

Great suspicions were entertained that this sudden event had been occasioned by poison; but, the characters both of Mr. and Mrs. Billington were too well established in the world of gallantry, to render the supposition that the husband, through jealousy, had taken poison, credible, or that the wife had administered the potion for the sake of gratifying her passions *ad libitum*. No, no! Mr. and Mrs. Billington understood each other's necessities far better! The easy compliances of the lady were too profitable to the fiddler, to render such a result probable.

Mrs. Billington, however, soon consoled herself for the loss of her double-bass husband, in the arms of those who performed more to her satisfaction on the strings of her heart, not only during the remainder of her stay at Naples, but in every town which she visited. Her vast musical talents, added to her nightly personal fame, never failed to furnish her with what the French call *de grande pratique*. Lovers, admirers, *cavalieri servanti*, were accepted by her and dismissed, as easily as fashions are taken up

and laid down, according as inclination, or reasons of a more *solid* nature, happened to predominate. Happily for the public at large, no individual occupied her undivided attention, until, by a turn of the wheel of fortune, she found herself engaged at the theatre della Scala at Milan. Here it was that Mrs. Billington got acquainted with a fellow of the name of Filisan, a native of Lyons, who had, it is said, been one of the active murderous agents, employed against the unfortunate nobility, who fell by wholesale in the *Place du bel Course* of that city, by cannon à la mitraille; it being then thought more expeditious, as it was at a time of the year when the days were getting short, and at a period when the blood-hounds had a deal of business on their hands, to fire on the wretched victims of revolutionary phrenzy in groups, than to dispatch them separately by the sainte guillotine.

The work of slaughter being at length accomplished, Filisan followed the army of cut-throats to Italy, and arrived with it at Milan, in the capacity of a garde-magasin. Being in the prime of youth, possessing a fine athletic figure and other personal advantages, he soon got introduced to the company of the *filles des menus plaisirs*, who formed the corps de ballet;

and, step by step, he ingratiated himself into the society of the principal dancers at the theatre della Scala, and amongst the rest into the society of the Zerbi, a lady who was at that time as celebrated for her feats on the "light fantastic toe," as she was for the liberality with which she dispensed her personal favours; and who afterwards, though a woman of the lowest extraction, and the sister of a sbirro, became the wife of Alvise Manin, nephew to the last Doge of Venice: whom, by the bye, she has ruined by her extravagance.

Finding, however, that her connection with Filisan was unfavourable to her private speculations, and having also, on sundry occasions, felt the weight of his massy fist on her slender and elegant shoulders, and the nimbleness of his fingers in her pockets, whenever she brought home her earnings from the theatre, she thought proper to discard from her favour a man, whom she found intent on gratifying his *amour propre* at the expense of her professional labours.

In this unsatisfactory state of his affairs Filisan cast his eyes about, and at last fixed them on Mrs. Billington, who was then singing at the same theatre; and, so well did the wary Frenchman play his part, that in a very short time the lady became Madame Filisan, to the great as-

tonishment as well as regret of all her real friends; for the fellow's finances were at that time in so deplorable a state, notwithstanding his filchings from the Zerbi, and his gambling speculations, that, on the day of his wedding, he was scarcely possessed of a second shirt: at least, such is the story which Mrs. Billington herself told to Sarah, her cousin, who lived with her from the time she left England, in the capacity of a menial servant.

Being thus raised from a state of misery and wretchedness to one of comparative affluence, Filisan now dressed himself out in an elegant French uniform, and Mrs. Billington caused it to be reported, that she had purchased him a commission, which entitled him to wear it. This, however, was not the case.

In a short time after her marriage, the poor lady had bitter cause to lament the step she had taken. Her face and arms exhibited constant proofs of the Frenchman's pugnacious powers; even before the honey-moon had expired. Justice, however, speedily overtook him. For his impudence in wearing the French uniform, and for his other *fourberies*, he was publicly flogged, in St. Mark's Place, at Venice, by order of General Serrurier; and banishment would have followed, had it not been for the interference

of Giuseppe Alcaini, the gentleman at whose house Mrs. Billington lodged. This Signor Alcaini was father to the bishop and general of that name, and had been a famous man at the bar; probably the only one who shone unrivalled at the *forum Veneta* for so long a period. It was his greatest ambition to entertain at his splendid house and sumptuous table, the *prime donne* of any celebrity, during the time of their performing at Venice. Mrs. Billington being a lively, pleasant woman, might have remained there as long as she chose; but, as her French *maitre de magasin* was obliged to leave it, she thought proper to go with him to Treviso, where she purchased a country-house of the patrician Giovanni Veronese, at San Artien.

No sooner was she settled in it, than Filisan began repairing the old house, from top to bottom; and, for fear his spouse should decamp, as her brother and her cousin Sarah had done, he always forced her to accompany him, in an open cart, to buy planks, and bricks, and mortar, and sand, and every other material necessary for building. He obliged her to wear the coarsest garments, and never suffered her to put on a gown that cost more than two or three Venetian livres a yard. At their meals no cloth was ever put on the table; and, instead of using a knife

and fork, he would tear a fowl or a duck in pieces with his filthy fingers. The house in which they lived adjoined that of the patrician Cornaro, which, by means of an hydraulic machine, is surrounded with water as pure as crystal. One day, in his passion, the savage got hold of his wife, and swore he would drown her, unless she surrendered to him her jewels. To save her life, the unfortunate songstress complied; but never after were they returned to her. At last, beholding the horrible condition to which she was reduced by the brutal conduct of her husband, she one evening took French leave, almost *en chemise*, joined her brother at Venice, and set off with him for England.

Here she met with that reception as a singer which her great talents entitled her to; and hither her wretch of a husband had the audacity to follow her: but, as she was constantly under the protection of some *cher ami* or other, the first on the list being then the Duke of P——, a minister of state; as soon as Filisan presented himself at the theatre, as the husband of Mrs. Billington, for the purpose of receiving her salary, which was all he wanted, she had him instantly arrested; and he was afterwards, by order, as it is said, of the above-mentioned

Duke, justly sent out of the country, by virtue of the alien act.

Filisan returned to San Artien, vowing vengeance against England, and the whole English nation. Notwithstanding, however, all that Mrs. Billington had been made to suffer from this ruffian, and her knowledge that he was living with women of his own stamp, she often sent him money and presents from England; and, after a separation of fifteen years, actually went back to him!

"Frailty, thy name is woman!" The excuse which she gave to an English lady, for her folly in returning to such a monster, was her fear, that she might become the victim of her princely paramour, as a great comic actress of the day was reported to have been. To save what she had collected together from the grasp of her regal favourite, she wrote to her husband to come to England to fetch her. He assented; on condition that she made over to him every thing she possessed. This being complied with, Filisan re-visited this country under more favourable auspices than he had before done, and Mrs. Billington returned with him to Italy, taking with her a natural daughter, whom it is said she had had by an Englishman of the name of Mad-

docks. She had not been long at San Artien before her ruffian of a husband began his fistic operations upon her, and, on one of these occasions, so severe were the bruises she received, that from that day she took to her bed, and never rose from it alive!

Having thus got rid of his wife, Filisan's next step was to send the girl who went by the name of Maddocks to a convent, from a notion which had got into his head, that she was a child that Mrs. Billington had had by the philanthropic Duke of Sussex, and that if he could contrive to marry her himself, he stood a chance of getting a good fortune with her. In which golden dreams, however, he was, luckily for the object of them, foiled, by some individuals in England writing to the government, and getting the young lady, through the agency of the physician Aglietti, released from the convent and sent over to this country.

CHAPTER XXV.

VENICE.

THE BUONAPARTE FAMILY IN THE VENETIAN TERRITORIES.

Buonaparte plans the Destruction of the Venetian Republic .....Marriage of his sister Paulina.....Violation of the Venetian Territory.....Mission of Alvise Quirini to Paris .....Massacre at Verona.....Peace of Campo Formio..... Sale of the Venetian States to Austria.....The new Mock-Government described.....Heavy Contributions levied by Buonaparte at Venice.....Plunder of the Works of Art .....Josephine's visit to Venice.

By this time, my reader must, I think, have formed a tolerably correct judgment, both of the past state of the Venetian territories, and of their present deplorable condition under the yoke of Austria. The outline which I have drawn of that condition is a correct one; but, the picture will not be complete, without the introduction of a few additional traits, in which will be exhibited in their true light, the conduct of Buonaparte towards the Venetians, and the spirit, the tone, the temper, and the intent, with which the overthrow of their venerable republic was effected by the son of the attorney of Ajaccio, preparatory to its being finally

handed over by him to Francis of Austria—the descendant of the immortal Maria Theresa!

Some highly interesting anecdotes of the exploits of *The Buonaparte Family in Italy*—mother as well as son, brothers as well as sisters—I reserve for my second volume, under the head "Milan," and shall only insert in this place such as either took place in, or have reference to, the hard fate of the once "Venezia la Ricca."

When the Cisalpines had literally become the humbled and degraded slaves of the "*Gran Madre Republica*," the plan was next formed for the ruin of that once happy people, the Venetians; a ruin which, no doubt, was hastened by the imbecillity and the treachery of the then powerful Francesco Pesaro, of whom I have already spoken, by his persuading the Venetian government to maintain an unarmed neutrality; which, as Mallet du Pan justly observed, was "una parola nuova nel vocabulario;" for, surely, if any one power wishes to be respected, it can only become so, from the force which it is able to oppose, in case of its being threatened with violence by another. For the logic of sovereigns is generally comprised in the short and pithy argument which Frederick the First caused to be engraved on his

cannon, "Voilà mon droit:" and Frederick might, with some shew of propriety, enforce it; for he possessed both men and money, and was unlike Buonaparte, who, when complaints were made to him against the peculations of his numerous civil and military *employés* would answer, "Neho bisogna di uomini e dinari, per far la guerra: ciò mi basta."

Being on a visit to the Duke di Serbelloni, at Castel Gomberto, one of his country seats, I was requested to accompany him to Milan, as he had been invited to a grand *déjeûné* given at the Palazzo Serbelloni, in consequence of the marriage of Paulina Buonaparte with General Le Clerc; which said *déjeûné* was assuredly not served up in a homely, democratical style; since it would scarcely be possible for pen to describe the magnificence that was displayed upon the occasion.

From that time, I never saw Madame Le Clerc, except accidentally on my return from Spain, in my way to Italy, when I again met her at Marseilles, where she had just arrived, with the body of her husband, who had died at St. Domingo; and sometime afterwards at Rome, when she had become the Princess Borghese. But she was then so much altered, as scarcely to be recognized; for, at the time of

her marriage to her first husband, she was really a most beautiful woman.

As I have mentioned the sumptuous *déjeûné* given by Buonaparte at the palace Serbelloni, on the marriage of his sister, I shall here take occasion to express the astonishment I have often felt, that this Corsican family should have been so uncommonly extravagant, seeing that not a soul of them had ever before been in affluent circumstances.

At the Hôtel di Belvidere, where I resided, I found that one of the waiters had been servant to Buonaparte, during the siege of Toulon, when his propitious star first shone upon his early exploits. At that time, he was so excessively poor and friendless, that he and his man often could not scrape together a sum sufficiently large to allow them to engage any other conveyance, from Marseilles to Toulon, than a single horse between them, and frequently they were obliged to go on foot, for want of that useful commodity which is said to "make the mare to go."

This man also accompanied Buonaparte to Paris, and continued in his service until he embarked for Egypt. He declared to me, that he had often heard his master say, "I must positively quit Paris and France for some little

time, or I shall meet with the fate that befel the Scipios: those two warriors were the greatest men Rome ever possessed: their statues were worshipped, and placed amongst those of their gods in the Pantheon, upon cushions; but they lost all their popularity with the Romans, by appearing too often before them." To this policy it may be attributed, that Buonaparte was induced to undertake the command of that most extraordinary expedition.

It was at the sumptuous *déjeûné*, given at the palazzo Serbelloni, on the occasion of the marriage of his sister Paulina to General Le Clerc, that the violation of the Venetian territory was determined on by Buonaparte. It was, however, necessary for him to proceed with every possible degree of caution, so as not openly to insult the hospitality of the Venetians; as the French army, at that time, were actually maintained by the very government, whose destruction had been irrevocably fixed.

To accomplish this destruction, Salicetti was directed to prepare some hundreds of peasants' dresses; which dresses were distributed amongst the men and officers; and under this disguise were Bergamo and Brescia invaded, in concert with

the Lecchis and a few turbulent and disaffected characters, so as to make it appear to the government at Venice, that the dismemberment of these two rich provinces had been the effect of a general and voluntary effort, on the part of the people, to get rid of their former mild government, and unite themselves with that of the Cisalpine.

Remonstrance, on the part of the Venetian government, was useless, and of no weight in the scale of republican equity and justice. The die had been cast by Buonaparte. Those places were now to be separated for ever from the Venetian territory.

On this occasion, the noble Alvise Quirini was sent ambassador extraordinary to Paris, to complain of this violation of their well-known neutrality and continued hospitality; notwithstanding the large sum advanced for the mediation of Barras with the other directors, for a further continuance of the Venetian neutrality and independence. On his arrival at his hotel, he found an order for him instantly to quit Paris, as Venice had, in the interim, been revolutionized; though the sum of money to be paid, had been actually anticipated; and the contributions levied by Buonaparte had been generally agreed to.

In this state were the negociations, when Buonaparte took possession of Verona, in open violation of all law, human and divine. And, what merit, I ask, could attach to a general, or to his army, for acting thus towards a friendly power, unprepared for resistance, except in the affections of its subjects, in an open country, against an unarmed population, and an unfortified city; whose inhabitants were cruelly plundered and massacred? Many of the poor defenceless people of Verona were barbarously executed by the dastardly French, on their becoming masters of the Venetian states; but, the noble resistance which they made sufficiently demonstrates, that their affection and love for their legitimate government, would have proved a powerful barrier against French aggression, had they been supplied with arms. But, from the fatal want of them, they were brutally butchered and treated as rebels, for having defended themselves, to the best of their power, against the invasion of a foreign enemy, who was indebted millions to the Venetian government, and whose armies must have perished, but for the supplies which that government had generously afforded them!

Such members of the Venetian government as had not time, or were not disposed, to aban-

don their situations and the trust reposed in them, by quitting Verona for Venice, were seized as hostages for the due fulfilment of the contract negociated at Paris; though the government no longer existed. Many persons at Verona were tried by a military court martial and shot. Amongst others, was my most particular friend Count Augustin Verità, who left behind him a young and beloved wife and child to deplore his melancholy fate. Ambassadors, commissioners, nobles, persons of all ranks and stations, were sent from Venice to Verona, and, *vice versâ*, form Verona to Venice: but the Pacha Buonaparte was inexorable, and not to be diverted from his plan of general devastation; and Venice, like the rest of Italy, was not to be exempt from the despotism of this unfeeling dictator! And, for all this accumulated affliction were the Venetians indebted to their own credulity, and to the hypocritical projects of the Corsican upstart!

The base pretence set up by Buonaparte for his hostility towards the Venetians, and for sacrilegiously entering their territories, was, that the Veronese, headed by Count Augustin Verita, had inhumanly forced their way into the French hospitals, and had there massacred the sick and wounded of his army!

Now, had this even been the case, what right had he to make the whole nation, or its government, responsible for the act of an individual? This, however, was not the case; as has been proved, beyond the shadow of a doubt: it is, however, of a piece with all the foul deeds of treachery performed by Buonaparte for the overthrow of the Venetian government. The above-mentioned unheard-of calumny was the sheer invention of his own brain. Not being able to discover traitors among the Venetians, he had recourse to this low and infamous subterfuge, in order to palliate his want of feeling for his own sick and wounded, who were dying every where like rotten sheep, for the want of medical assistance, and for lack of the common necessaries of life. For Buonaparte had little or no care for any of his men, when they could no longer be of service to him in the field of battle. He then most philosophically considered them an incumbrance, which it was desirable to get rid of. As "dead men tell no tales," many a vile perpetrator of his foul orders has fallen a victim to his own misdeeds, to avoid discovery. By some of them, however, who were lucky enough to escape the just reward that awaited their bloody deeds, the real facts have been brought to light; and those facts completely

exonerate the Venetian government of the foul crime laid to their charge by the unprincipled invader.

Besides, if the Venetian government had really wished to destroy the French army, it would never, from mere motives of humanity, have maintained that army, for a considerable time, in the Terra Firma; since, by doing so, it actually committed a violation of its neutrality, as it regarded Austria. For at that time, from the depredations and plunderings of the French army, the people of the different provinces were so incensed against them, that they only wanted the word of command, for every man of them to have risen *en masse*.

This I well remember, that in accompanying some persons who were going to Milan, for the purpose of regulating the excise and customs duties, on passing through Bergamo and Brescia, we were surrounded by the whole population, who exclaimed to one of the patricians, who was with us in the carriage, "What is the republic about? what does the sluggish senate mean by all this inactivity? are we to be sacrificed like sheep, and slaughtered by the French butchers?"

But, alas, alas, instead of putting arms into their hands, and animating them to a general

defence of the state, they were exhorted to act with the greatest prudence—least, forsooth, they should give General Buonaparte and his army cause to complain!

O, fallacious policy! O, unwise forbearance! Thus were the poor people lulled into a state of apathy, until the Corsican invader, discovering their inviolable attachment to their government, and tired of acting the hypocrite any longer, revolutionized both Bergamo and Brescia!

While these things were going on, the Genoese were secretly enjoying the destruction of their ancient rivals, the Venetians; never once recollecting the good old proverb—"Hodie mihi, cras tibi." And here I must be allowed to repeat, what I have before so strenuously urged; namely, that Italy would never have been conquered by the French or by the Austrians, if the whole of that country had been opposed to the enemy. The policy which has fatally prevailed, has been to keep the Italians constantly at variance amongst themselves; and we well know, from the highest authority, that "a house divided against itself cannot stand:" but Buonaparte, by disguising his real intentions, and by professing the opposite of that which he intended to perform, contrived to make them individually hate each

other; and by so doing did he more completely throw Italy into a state of division, than any other conqueror had done.

Alvise Quirini being returned from his embassy to Paris, Buonaparte, in the month of June 1796, at a small hovel in the town of Mestre, directed, nay commanded, the imprisonment of the three Inquisitors of State; and, as soon as his fiat had been obeyed, the sham democratic republic was installed in their room. The respected names of Pisani, of Dolfin, of Cornaro, of Ferro, and of Mocenego, were dishonoured, degraded, polluted, by the infamous wretches with whom they were now associated! But, all the men of birth, of rank, and of probity, who, from their *bonâ fide* love of reform, had unfortunately been led astray from the path of duty, were soon convinced, that such an *olio spagnuolo* could not long continue; and many of them declined the honour of serving their country, in company with the rebels who had been chosen by Buonaparte.

But, here follows another Corsican stratagem, more atrocious, if possible, than all the rest. Will it be credited, that, during the whole of this time, Buonaparte had been negociating the sale of the Venetian States to Austria? for whilst the manœuvres, and the murders, and

the butcherings, were committing at Verona, that ginger-bread compact, the peace of Campo Formio took place, in the course of which the above states were actually bargained away! The comedy of errors was, however, still kept up in all its scenes; until at last the curtain dropped, and convinced the Venetians, as well as all Italy, that they had been performing the prominent parts of folly and of imbecility, which distinguished the sad tragedy.

Though Buonaparte at first insisted, that persons taken out of the lowest class should form the major portion in the new mock-government, he, nevertheless, when it was proposed that some of these mushroom members of his own creation should be sent to him at Campo Formio—(for he still kept up the farce of making the Venetian democrats believe that he was treating for their independence, though Austria had concluded the contract, whereby she was to receive the Venetian States as a compensation for the Low Countries)—he rejected the rebel deputies with disdain, as he no longer stood in need of their assistance, and insisted, that two noble Venetians, as had been the custom, thould be sent thither, with Lavezzari, the secretary of the late senate, at their head; who had, for many years, been the resident

minister of the republic, at the Court of London.

It is to the said Lavezzari, between whom and myself there existed a long and uninterrupted friendship, that I am indebted for many of the anecdotes recorded in the present work. My friend had strongly disapproved of the impolitic conduct of his government, in refusing the generous offer of England, made in the year 1793, and repeated on the first invasion of the Italian territory by the French, of supplying the republic with men, with money, and with ships, for the purpose of protecting the Adriatic. But, all the arguments he could make use of, founded on deep knowledge acquired by a long and skilful diplomatic career, were over-ruled by Bataja and Francesco Pesaro.

Buonaparte, however, never had the courage to come to Venice, until after he had been dubbed "*Imperatore.*" Shortly after he assumed that title, he added thereto that of "*Altissimo,*" which gave rise to the following jeu d'esprit on the two emperors—

"L'Altissimo di sù ci manda la tempesta,
L'Altissimo di giù ci mangia qual che resta :
Fra questi due Altissimi
Noi restiamo povcrissimi !"

The contributions levied by Buonaparte at Venice, on his newly bought and newly sold slaves, were enormous. The statues, the manuscripts, the public library, the paintings, the shipping, were seized. The vessels in the arsenal, and a great part of the buildings, were destroyed; together with the famous Bucentoro, or galley, in which the Doge, on the feast of the Ascension, used to go, accompanied by a great number of the patricians, to marry the Adriatic; and a description of which vessel I have already given.

As soon as the government had been sufficiently democratized, Madame Josephine Buonaparte made her appearance at Venice, in the place of her lord and master, attended by all the revolutionary demireps of her party. The only Venetian noble lady who paid her any particular attention was Cecilia Tron, attended by her friend Annetta Vadori, and her democratical husband Zorzi Richi.

CHAPTER XXVI.

VENICE.

THE BUONAPARTE FAMILY IN THE VENETIAN TERRITORIES.

Removal of the Works of Art to Paris.....Josephine leaves Venice for the Terra Firma.....Her visit to the Bishop of Treviso.....Buonaparte and Mrs. Billington at Bologna .....Cecilia Tron and Zorzi Richi.....Buonaparte's "independent" Cisalpin Republic described.....Fatal effects of domestic division exemplified in the case of the Royal Family of Spain.....Brief Sketch of the Spanish Court and Nation.

THE populace of Venice supported the loss of all the beautiful works of art with a most philosophical indifference, until they saw the preparations which were making, at the door of St. Mark's Church, to take down the four famous horses, brought from Constantinople by the Venetians, when they conquered that city, and of which I have elsewhere spoken. The sight of what was going on occasioned a deep national sensation; and, if there had been at that precise moment, any manly spirit ready

to head the populace, a revolt would inevitably have taken place. But their once leading men had been deprived of their property; and with that property had fled their former manly spirit of resistance. So true is it, that "L'uomo senza pecunia è l'immagine della morte." The people, therefore, made a merit of necessity, and suffered the French to proceed unmolested in the work of taking down these invaluable ornaments of their once famous city. No Venetian labourer could, however, be found to assist them in the work of national robbery; and the whole populace attended the embarkation of the four steeds, as they would have attended the body of a revered friend to the grave.

Had St. Mark's Place and the great tower been moveable, the French would have carried them off, amidst the cries of "Viva la libertà et l'egualianza; chi non ruba non impiegnisce la panza." In the Terra Firma, they plundered the several Monte di Pietà; which were establishments similar to our pawnbrokers' shops; and thereby was occasioned the ruin of thousands of honest and respectable families.

From Venice Madame Josephine and her precious train of democratical trollops passed

to the Terra Firma, where they made it a constant practice, as they had before done at Venice, to take every thing they had an inclination to, without paying for it. They never waited for an invitation, but visited wherever they pleased. Amongst the rest, Merini, the Bishop of Treviso, was obliged to entertain them at dinner; in the course of which the old man caught a horrid fit of the gout in his hand, from a cold occasioned by the loss of a large, beautiful, and valuable ring, which Josephine had thought proper to take from his fingers; but which, unfortunately, she forgot to return. The poor bishop had but slender hopes of being made a cardinal; for at that time the title was out of fashion, and he died before the religious farce was brought upon the political boards. Upon the above occasion, the Venetians were accustomed to observe, "I Francesi fanni molto uso del verbo *avere*, ma quello del verbo *dare* non hanno nel loro vocabulario."

When Buonaparte and the French army entered Bologna, Mrs. Billington happened to be singing at the opera; and, so terrified was she, that she refused to perform. Upon hearing this, the Hero of Italy ordered her to come to him in his box, and he there assured

her, she had nothing to fear from him, as he "never was at war with the fair sex." He nevertheless thought proper to arrest Mrs. Watson, the English Consul's wife, and had her dragged about, from place to place, for eight years, as a prisoner of war. He treated Mrs. Spencer Smith in the same manner, as well as another English lady at Venice. The former was arrested, by Buonaparte's order, immediately on the French coming to Venice; the other two, while he was in Russia. One of them had resided in Venice twenty years, and was married to a Venetian. In short, the whole life of this man was a continued series of contradictions; but the greatest of all was, perhaps, the surrendering himself up to the English, whom he absolutely detested, and whom he had always described as a nation of pirates—"Cette nation doit être écrasée," was an expression he was accustomed to make use of, whenever the great man happened to be thwarted by the British government, in any of his "*grandes pensées.*"

I have mentioned Madame Cecilia Tron, as being the only Venetian noble lady, who paid Josephine any particular attention. Her reason for so doing was briefly this: she had at the time a lover of the name of Zorzi Richi, a

Greek and a native of Corfu, whom she afterwards married. For this animal, who was the *ne plus ultra* of a Jacobin, Cecilia was extremely anxious to procure some appointment under the new government, and on this account was she induced to pay court to this female fox under the garb of a lamb. Nor was Cecilia unsuccessful in her application to the Cisalpin regeneratrice, for Zorzi, sure enough, became one of the *nouveaux employés;* and, rather than have his name left out of the list, the brute would submit to have been made a night-man; for "charity begins at home," was Zorzi's favourite motto; and he had moreover a prodigious attachment to the Agrarian law with regard to property, in the expectation of securing a few acres for himself.

But, in the midst of the democratical exhibitions which Cecilia Tron gave at her palace on the Grand Canal, she could not, I think, help sometimes comparing her then situation, with the honours which she had once received from the hands of the Emperor, Joseph the Second, and contrasting the manners and habits of her then raggamuffin guests, with those of the distinguished individuals who formerly attended her delightful parties, at the times when that

monarch, whose letters she was accustomed so highly to extol, visited her, during his stay at Venice.

And never, surely, was there such an "independent" government, as the republican one, which Buonaparte, in his loving kindness, had carved out for the poor Cisalpins! At the head of all their public decrees, in large letters, stood these words: "For the honour and independence of the infant Cisalpin Republic, the affectionate and loving Republic of France, orders and commands," &c. &c.

I can never think of the conduct of Buonaparte towards the people of Italy, but it reminds me of the sort of "independence" which he promised to father and son, when the unhappy differences broke out between Charles the Fourth and his hopeful boy, the present right dearly "beloved" Ferdinand of Spain. Woe to that sovereign, to that family, or to that nation, who shall submit to have their private, or their public, differences settled by a foreigner! By so doing, they forfeit every claim to domestic tranquillity, and bid a lasting adieu to that mutual confidence, which, when once destroyed, can never be restored; and produce that precise state of things, which must either terminate in

the triumph of one of the parties, or in both of them becoming the slaves of a foreign interference.

Thus was it with the above individuals, when Buonaparte seduced father and son to quit their own dominions. Finding both of them to be in the wrong, from their inability to do that which was right, he cunningly contrived to make them both equally culpable, and both equally unworthy of reigning, when those wiseacres of princes called him in to be the umpire in their disputes; and when, for the "honour and the independence" of Spain, as he had before done for the "honour and the independence" of the Cisalpins, he had "ordered" and "commanded" father, mother, son, brother, and lover to relinquish their authority—a command, which they never would have been forced to obey, had they been as much united for the public good, as they were divided in their several views. By an overwhelming stretch of power, a nation may, for a while, be conquered; but never can it be subdued, without the entire extermination of its inhabitants—in which case, it would not be worth possessing.

But the people of Spain, I venture to assert—and I do it after much reflection and consideration—are at least a century behind the rest of

the natives of Europe, in point of civilization. They are neither so rich, nor so valiant, nor so generous, as people have imagined them to be.

A bigotry which borders more on idolatry than it does on religion; and a superstition which is the offspring of gross, and palpable, and almost tangible ignorance, must, and ever will, have the inevitable effect of retarding the general improvement of the human species.

To apply this to the present state of Spain. If we take a sober and impartial review of their recent conduct, we shall find them to be a race of mortals, differing from every other nation; and especially that portion of them which belong to the old stock of Grandees. To me they appear to be the very outcasts of human manufactory: they seem to have been formed in a different mould from that of the rest of their fellow creatures. I scarcely ever recollect seeing one of them, who was not marked in the countenance like the Pharisee who gave our Saviour the sacrilegious slap; who was not hunch-backed, or had crooked or ricketty legs; or who had not an immensely large squat body, with a little round head tottering on a short neck; like the Chinese figures which one sees at all the tea-shops nodding for customers, or the figure of punch running upon rollers.

Of all people on earth, the Spaniards are the most lazy, the most lousy, the most filthy, the most ignorant, the most savage, the most cruel, and the most implacable in their hatred towards all other nations; but especially towards the French, for whom they have an unconquerable, a deadly, aversion, and whose language is even less known amongst them, than it is in any village in Russia.

On the arrival in Spain of the Crown Prince of Naples, with the princess his sister—who was the first wife of the present king, and whose sister was destined to be the wife of the said prince of Naples—when they alighted at Barcelona, at the palace prepared for their reception, they had more than half an hour to wait, before they could procure a glass of water; for there was not a servant who understood French, Italian, German, or English.

Nearly the same thing took place with the ladies who were about to be presented to the Queen of Charles the Fourth. They were introduced to an old, squat, punchy figure, with her head nodding backwards and forwards, dressed in a hoop-petticoat, much wider than the little body was long, with ruffles at her elbows reaching down to her high-heeled shoes; on her head was a wide cap, covered with lace, a foot and

a half higher than her toupee, which was combed smooth over a black roller; and, added to the whole, was a complexion more resembling a rotten olive, or fried oil, than the human skin. All we could get out of this "model of divine perfection," was "Nada, nada; non intendo auste:" and, if it had not been for one of the foreign ambassadors, who conducted us to the ambassador of the country to which we respectively belonged, old "Nada" would have "nada'd" us till the day of resurrection; and when the Queen told her our business for the next presentation to the princess, she turned round like a whipping top, laughed like a Cherokee, and shewed her teeth like a monkey; which said teeth, one in and one out, resembled, for all the world, the old rusty bars of a prison.

There was not a single carriage belonging to the royal family, that had any other harness than ropes; excepting one, which belonged to the Queen, and a chariot, which was the property of the then all-powerful and infamous Godoi, the Prince of Peace; whose anti-chamber for reception of the Grandees was at the head of the stair-case; and when he saw me he politely conducted me by the hand to the presence chamber of his levee; and as politely shut the door in their faces. He neither spoke,

nor understood, any tongue except Spanish. Of course, my conversation with him was of a very limited nature, as I was but scantily acquainted with the idiom of that language; but Massaredo and Gravina were kind enough to explain to me the Prince's civilities.

In short, I quitted Spain with less regret than I ever quitted any country in Europe; since it had no post, but on horseback; no high roads but from one part of France. The arts and sciences were neglected; very little trade was going on; no agriculture but of the most ordinary kind was encouraged; few manufactories; and the whole country had nothing to recommend it, but its fine sky and its fruitful but scandalously-neglected soil.

In Spain, there are no public inns but such as are fit for Spaniards to enter; and no provisions are to be procured in any of them, except those on the road from Perpignan to Barcelona, and on the roads towards Madrid, and the Estremaduras. When a traveller arrives at one of these inns, and asks the landlord what he has to give his visitors for dinner, the fellow will answer, laconically, "nada;" that is to say, nothing. If, therefore, you happen to be on a road, at a distance from any town or village, and have not had the precaution to take a supply with you,

you must go without. To be sure, if the inn happen to be situated in a village or town, the landlord—standing at the door of his pig-stie, with a segar in his mouth, and his knowledge-box covered with an immensely large slouched, broad-brimmed hat, and a dirty long cloak, even in the month of July or August—will sometimes condescend to point out to you the different shops or stalls, at which are sold beef, mutton, bread, butter, and the other things necessary for your dinner; but, not a peg will he stir, either to procure them for you, or to dress them after you shall have purchased them.

And then, again, at night! if you are fortunate enough to obtain a little clean straw to sleep upon, to prevent your being covered with vermin, you will have procured a treasure, which few, very few, enjoy. But, notwithstanding all this, the unconscionable landlord will, in the morning, send you in a bill, which is often as exorbitant as that of an English hotel-keeper, on the Bath road, at the height of the season.

CHAPTER XXVII.

VENICE.

THE BUONAPARTE FAMILY IN THE VENETIAN TERRITORY.

Napoleon now visits Venice for the first time.....Meets the Prefects at Vicenza.....His conversation with the Marquis Solari respecting the Sette Communi.....Napoleon at the Venetian Casinos.....Appoints sundry Ladies dames d'honneur to the Empress.....Account of the Vice Queen of Italy .....My interview with Barras.....Napoleon's Character by Barras.....And by Augereau.

Some idea of the naturally quiet and peaceable disposition of the Venetians, may be formed from the reply which General Miolis, when governor of Venice, made to Buonaparte, on being reprimanded for so frequently absenting himself from the city, and going to Mestre and Treviso—"General," said Miolis, "the Venetians are just as well governed in my absence, as they would be in my presence: they are by nature quiet, and want no force to controul them; for there is at Venice a considerable population, but no mob."

Napoleon, after his coronation, thought for the first time, of visiting his Italian slaves, and determined to include Venice in the general tour. Orders were accordingly sent round to all the civil magistrates, to meet him within the limits of their several governments.

The prefects, as the heads of the different departments, with the sub-prefects, and their ladies, were all directed to appear *en grand train.* Milan was no longer the fashion, and Venice was become "ma bonne ville."

Vicenza was to be the rendezvous of the prefects and sub-prefects. The famous Olympic Theatre, built by the immortal Palladio, and to light up which requires no less than a but of oil, attracted the notice of the "altissimo imperatore." Observing which, the magistrate took the liberty of informing the mighty man, that from its dilapidated and neglected state, they were fearful they should shortly be deprived of this grand national monument. No sooner did he hear this, than, turning round and calling to his adopted son—for no mortal was allowed to approach the person of the "altissimo" uncalled for—he said, "I authorize you, Eugene, to present the commissioners of the Olympic with a hundred thousand livres." And, that the admiring spectators might be struck with his

munificence, this direction was given in an audible tone of voice. The prince bowed assent; but the money for the repairs was never forthcoming; and this beautiful specimen of architectural skill continues in the same dilapidated condition to this day.

As Buonaparte had always a list of the prefects and sub-prefects of the departments he was about to visit, he singled out such to converse with as were of noble birth. Seeing amongst them the name of the Marquis Antonio Solari—who was then governor of the Siberians of Italy, in the mountains called the Sette Communi, and in a small village of which, called La Mara, some of the inhabitants had opposed themselves to the unusual taxation, and had shot several excise officers who had come to enforce the payment of the same—Buonaparte said to him, "Marquis Solari, when you return to Asiago—" (the name of the capital of the Sette Communi)—"tell the people they must submit to be placed on the same footing with the rest of my subjects, and that if they again rebel, I will certainly exterminate them."

The Marquis replied—"I hope your Majesty will not confound a populace of nearly forty thousand peaceable souls, with a few misguided individuals."

"But I will be obeyed," continued Buonaparte; "my laws shall be executed, and my officers shall remain unmolested. Tell them, Sir, that I have long arms, and can at any time reach them."

The Marquis Solari replied, "I hope your Majesty will dispense with my so doing, since all Europe, I believe, is well convinced of the length of those arms."

Buonaparte being rather pleased with this reply, began to take snuff by wholesale; and then, addressing the Marquis, he said, "I think I have seen you before?"—"Yes, please your Majesty," answered Solari, "at Milan, in consequence of an application to your Majesty, for the restoration of two carriages of which I had been robbed, and also at the marriage of the Princess Borghese with General Le Clerc, at my friend's the Duke di Serbelloni's, where your Majesty was pleased to invite me to the public breakfast." "O, yes, yes," replied Buonaparte, "I remember." On leaving the Marquis to speak to another person, he said laughingly, "So, Marquis Solari, you think the people of the Sette Communi know the length of my arm?"

This conversation took place at Vicenza; from which place Buonaparte set off for Ve-

nice. But the good people of that city, having, for centuries, been in the habit of seeing most of the sovereigns of Europe, were by no means struck with astonishment at his much vaunted abilities; and he lost, at that place, much of his celebrity, on their becoming personally acquainted with him: for he confined his conversation to simple interrogatories; therein imitating those princes who, being deficient in logical powers, aim at being understood by a vacant smile, a shake of the head, or a shrug of the shoulders; and who find it easier to listen to what is said to them, than give thereto an appropriate off-hand reply.

When Buonaparte visited the Casinos of the noble ladies, his conversation was extremely limited. "What's your name? Whereabouts do you live? When do you go to the Terra Firma? Have you ever been to Paris? Are you married? How many children have you? Who is your husband?" One lady told him, she had been married several years, but had had no children. "Then kick your husband out of bed," was his reply. However, he fixed his attention on one of the most aukward and maladroit ladies of the whole company, who had no earthly quality to recommend her, excepting her youth; invited her to dine with him on the fol-

lowing day; and appointed her one of the ladies of honour to the Empress; as he did also the ladies Catherine Micchielli Pisani, Lucy Mocenigo, Elizabeth Damula, Marietta Quirini, &c.; but, as there was at that time no Empress in Italy, these poor females were under the necessity of trotting all the way to Milan, to perform their noble office, near the person of the Vice-queen, the wife of Prince Eugene, with an appointment of four hundred livres a year.

These ladies of honour, however, used to afford the vice-queen no small amusement, when at Monza; where the Prince Eugene, her husband, was wont to employ his leisure hours in making them good christians, by ducking them from head to heels—to the no small diversion of her suite, and the mortification of the aforesaid *dames d'honneur*. However, it was one way of being soused into favour; for one and all of them were fortunate enough to procure good situations for their husbands; nor could it be attributed to any improper secret influence, since all the ladies, excepting one, bore unimpeachable characters.

The Princess of Bavaria, the vice-queen, was certainly a very virtuous and amiable woman; but, so totally a slave was she to the tyrannical etiquette of Buonaparte's court, that she dared not to interfere in behalf of any individual; nor

was it ever known that she acted illiberally. When commanded by Buonaparte, she would make a present to her ladies of a French silk gown, a shawl, a necklace, or a pair of ear-rings, as a compensation for those which the prince her husband had seized, to keep them in good-humour.

When the Empress Josephine was at Milan, the vice-queen scarcely ever showed herself; as she could not brook the idea of giving up her rank by birth, to a newly created Empress of yesterday. A similar feeling she also discovered at the time of Napoleon's coronation. When the Queens of Spain, Naples, and Holland, were the train-bearers to Josephine, she refused to go in the procession, and absented herself, under pretence of sudden illness; and, from motives of prudence, she kept her room, while most of the grand fêtes were going on, upon that occasion.

On the birth of Prince Eugene's first daughter, Napoleon created her Princess of Bologna, and the city of that name was graciously charged with the cost of her establishment and education. This, however, was a mere trifle, considering the high honour that was conferred on them! And, truly, what were a few millions to an inland town like Bologna!

Buonaparte was certainly one of the best cal-

culators in the universe ; for he never speculated without a reason. His honours were always let out to interest. He would often talk of his long arms ; but, if he had added thereto his long sight, in accomplishing every object—up to a certain point—that presented itself to his view, he certainly would not have overrated the degree to which he possessed this extraordinary faculty.

As I have more than once mentioned the share which the well-known Barras had in the overthrow of the Venetian republic, I think I cannot do better than introduce into this chapter, an anecdote or two respecting this extraordinary man.

During my visit to Brussels, in the year 1803, Barras was living in that city in very good style. Hearing of my arrival, he paid us a visit at the Hôtel de Bellevue, and gave us a general invitation to his table, during our stay. It was during one of these visits, that the sale to Moreau of Grosbois, which had been the property of the present King of France, and had been presented to Barras by the National Assembly, while he was one of the Directory, took place.

He would frequently say to us, when speaking of Buonaparte, " vous verrez, mes amis, qu'il ne mourira pas tranquille à Paris."

He had a female with him, whom he introduced to us as one of his aid-de-camps, and who was constantly *en habit d'homme.* At Brussels, he was always called General Barras, and was not allowed to be visited by, or to receive visits from, the inhabitants. Penticulon, the then prefect of that city, kept a watchful eye on the exile. At the time of my stay there, another noble Venetian beside my husband, was lodging at our hotel, to whom Barras made himself known; as he did, indeed, to all travellers. This nobleman we one day met at Barras's house, when the following curious conversation relative to the Venetian Ambassador, Alvise Quirini Stampatello, and the violation of that republic, (for the protection of which Barras had received a very considerable *douceur,*) took place.

By the bye, the Abbé Fortis, who was at Paris, while Quirini was treating for the neutrality of Venice, used to say, that he had not been sufficiently liberal to Barras's subalterns; who, in consequence, marred the intention of their master. Be that as it may, Barras confessed to us, that the Five Directors were only the executioners of the peremptory will of the great Buonaparte, and that Alvise Quirini, in

his mode of negociating the transaction, had discovered himself to be a mere blockhead.

"I believe," said the Venetian nobleman, in reply to this observation, "it would have been a very difficult task to have found an honest man capable of treating, on equal terms, with the corrupt government which then existed in France."

"There," replied Barras, "is the grand error into which so many people have fallen. Nothing was further from the intention of the civil government in France, than to make territorial conquests, or to stir up the governments of other countries against our own. It was all owing to the army, and to the ungovernable ambition of that Jean-F—— Buonaparte; and which ambition will never cease but with his life, and ultimately be his overthrow.

"After Buonaparte had made himself master of Italy (which, I confess, to my bitter regret, was my own fault), the civil government of France had no influence whatever, but was wholly dependant on the military; who, from a sentiment of blind enthusiasm, were subservient to Buonaparte.

"I was the most strenuous advocate for a general peace; and, above all, for a peace with England. Had she acceded to that peace, and

had not the Directory been betrayed, Buonaparte would never have been able, in an underhand way, to have made himself Dictator, to the destruction of the best interests of France: for all his conquests have only served to rob her of men and of money. He squandered the treasures of France and of Italy upon two hundred thousand men, who thus had the means of corrupting millions. This, I assure you, is the real state of the case.

"There were three things which Buonaparte was suffered to commit with impunity, any one of which would have cost the life of any other man. His conduct towards Kleber in Egypt; his cruelty towards his prisoners; and his coming from Egypt to Paris without performing quarantine, and there upsetting the government; were all offences, for which he was on the point of being declared *hors de la loi*. He, however, triumphed over all of them, and has completed his ingratitude by banishing me, his first friend and liberal benefactor!

"The way, too, in which all his operations have hitherto been seconded by his good fortune, is altogether astonishing. How long it will last it is impossible for me to say; but I think I may venture to assert, that the impetuosity of his character will shortly carry him out of his depth. Had he governed the French with the precau-

tionary mildness of the Directory, he would long ago have been buried in the dust. Happy would it have been for Europe, if he had never arrived at his present giddy elevation! But he rules his subjects with a rod of iron; and France, intoxicated with her gigantic conquests—conquests which she can only retain as long as the fanaticism which has blinded her to her real interest shall continue—must, sooner or later, submit to another revolution, before Europe can be restored to its just equilibrium."

All this was uttered by Barras with an energy that gave to his words the conviction of truth. He was remarkably animated while he was speaking; and, so anxious were we to hear him justify himself on many points that had been laid to his charge, that we never interrupted him, except when he happened to appeal to us for our opinion.

I shall here relate another curious circumstance, which took place at a dinner at the Hague, where, by accident, we met with Marshal Augereau, the Duke de Castiglione.

In the beginning of the French revolution, Augereau was a common soldier in one of the Neapolitan regiments; from which, through the interest of the French ambassador, Perregou, he had been discharged, and had been taken, by

that gentleman, into his house, in the capacity of fencing-master to his children. Wishing to figure away in the revolution, Augereau prevailed on the ambassador to give him letters of introduction to the principal cities in his route to France, that he might defray the expenses of his journey by giving lessons to academies. Being acquainted with Busienello, the Venetian ambassador at Naples, he procured a letter from him to my husband at Venice; who was a great proficient in the said art, and one of the best swordsmen in all Italy.

When we were at the Hague, on entering one day the house of a gentleman, with whom we were to dine, he introduced us, by name, to Augereau. His Venetian acquaintance knew the general immediately; but, not wishing to hurt his feelings, my husband did not remind him of their former acquaintance at Venice. However, being seated opposite each other at table, Augereau said to him—"Good God! I did not at first recollect you. How happy am I to see you again! Don't you recollect going round, at the academy, with your silver plate, to collect the money for me, from the friends whom you were good enough to interest in my behalf at Venice? Come, come, Sir, don't be ashamed of having done a good action. I have not for-

got it, I assure you; and, while you are in this country, I hope you and your better half will favour me with your company at my residence." Count Zenobio was also one of the party.

We could not, however, avail ourselves of his hospitality, as we had a prior engagement; but we frequently met in the evening at Augereau's. Venice was often the subject of our conversation. When we were one day talking of Buonaparte's unprincipled sale of that republic to Austria, "Ma foi," said Augereau, "ce coquin nous a tout trompé! In saving him, the French republic upset itself. Had the Directory but ordered him to be shot on his landing from Egypt, it would have immortalized itself; but it was an unwieldy body, without a head; and that was the reason why Sieyes would not become one of them. I foresee we shall return to what we were; if we do not, indeed, sink into something worse! Buonaparte has deceived us all; and, though *he* has forgotten the hospitality of the Venetian Republic towards the French, *I* shall ever feel grateful for the civilities I once received from one of its subjects. Your sorrow at beholding the degraded state of your once happy country does infinite honour, both to your head and your heart."

I record this anecdote, for the purpose of

doing justice to the memory of Augereau: as it evinces feelings, which are but too seldom to be met with in those who have risen above their primitive condition in life.

CHAPTER XXVIII.

VENICE.

THE BUONAPARTE FAMILY IN THE VENETIAN TERRITORY.

My interview with General Menou.....Buonaparte's Preparations at Boulogne for the Invasion of England.....Is called the Arch Drover of Italy.....And why.....His Interview at Malghera with the Marquis di Solari..... Interesting account of the Inhabitants of the Sette Communi .....Their Language.....Their mode of living.....Produce of the Soil.....Their Habitations.....Mild Government of the Prefect Solari.....Ludicrous Anecdote.....A hint to the Secretary of State for the Home Department.....And a Caution to certain Mural Defacers.....The Authoress refuses to betray the interests of her country.....And is therefore placed under Surveillance.....But escapes from Treviso to Venice.....And thence to Malta.

I CONCLUDED the last chapter, with an account of my interviews, with Barras and with Augereau. I shall commence the present, with an anecdote which was related to me by another of Buonaparte's generals.

In the course of my conversations with General Menou, whilst he was governor of Venice, he more than once assured me, that of all Buonaparte's lunatic projects, the notion of invading England, and the idea of seducing Russia, while he was in Egypt, to co-operate with him in the conquest of India, were by far the most preposterous, and the least likely to be accomplished. Menou said, that Buonaparte had been more indebted to the folly of Nelson, in suffering him to get to Egypt, and to the British cruizers in allowing him to land, on his return therefrom, than to any thing that the French nation had done for him; for that if, in both instances, the English fleet had done their duty, he never would have escaped. "Your Rodney, and your Howe, and your Hood, would not," he would say, "have been so complaisant to the French general."

Indeed, that Buonaparte was never serious in his much boasted project of invading this country, may be gathered from the following facts, which took place during my stay at Paris, where I arrived shortly after Lord Nelson had attempted the bombardment of the port of Boulogne. A task, by the bye, of no very easy accomplishment; first, on account of the town itself being beyond the reach of the ships of

war; and, secondly, because no vessel drawing more than three or four feet water, can ever approach near enough for that purpose.

However, the Hero of the Nile did every thing that skill and bravery could accomplish; and the effects of his operations were pretty apparent, from the fact of the few gun-boats in that port, which had been prepared for the invasion of Old England, having been taken out of the water, and drawn upon dry land, and placed in a state of security, for fear of a second Nelsonian attack.

At Paris, the success of the invasion of England was looked upon as a dead certainty. In their mind's eye, the *badauds* of "ma bonne ville" already fancied they beheld the Corsican making his triumphant entry into their capital, loaded with the treasures of the Bank of England, and followed by the machinery and the manufactures aud the other spoils, of this the modern Carthage—about to be destroyed!

Amongst the number of the duped, was the Venetian patrician Niccoletto Cornara, who ventured to lay a considerable bet, that, on a certain day, Buonaparte would set off on his march from Dover for London. From the experience I had had of the French General's

menacing character, and knowing that, though he had accomplished many great things, he had left still greater ones unaccomplished, I ventured to take the bet; and, the better to convince myself of the real state of things, I determined on setting off from Paris on a visit to the coast, where these weighty preparations were said to be in such a state of forwardness. My love of England, and my knowledge of the character of the brave inmates of her wooden walls, ambitious as I knew Buonaparte to be, would not allow me to give credit to the rumour, that he entertained a serious design of making the attempt; more especially as I well knew that at that very moment, his attentions were directed to the secret movements of the cabinet of Vienna, and that he had just succeeded in getting into his possession a most important despatch, intended for the Austrian Ambassador, Count Cobenzel; and which despatch has, I believe, never been made public.

But to proceed. Scarcely had I, with my husband, proceeded a few paces on the road to Boulogne, before we met a considerable number of troops, with ammunition waggons, retrograding from the field of action, and marching in a totally different direction. In consequence of his knowledge of the above-

mentioned treachery towards the Austrian ambassador, my husband, at seeing this, exclaimed, "These troops are going to Vienna!" We stopped our carriage, for the purpose of letting them pass, and interrogated some of them, as to whence they came, and whither they were going? They replied, that they had come from the ports of Boulogne and Calais; that all the troops, after Nelson had paid them a visit at the former place, had been disbanded; and that they believed they were going to semestre.

We continued our journey to Boulogne; and, on our arrival, we immediately went down to the port to see this second edition of the Spanish Armada, upon which Buonaparte had expended twelve millions of livres; when we found the whole of it to consist of seventeen gunboats capable of carrying from thirty-five to forty men each, with two small field pieces!

This was the extent of the mighty force which had been put into requisition, and, which had kept John Bull in such a state of agitation! The whole, too, as I have already observed, were safely drawn up on dry land.

We dined at the *table d'hôte;* and, on our telling the story of our having come all the way from Paris to witness the embarkation,

we were heartily laughed at, for our pains. "Ah!" said one, "you are not the only dupes by hundreds, who have been taking this wild-goose journey." "No, no," said another, "the sea is not our element: the Pas de Calais is not Mount Cenis, where we were suffered to pass uninterruptedly; nor is it the Bochetta at Genoa, where the Austrians, with a couple of pieces of cannon, might have destroyed the whole French Army; nor is John Bull, or the English nation, like the divided people of Italy!"

We next proceeded to Calais, where we found, that all the preparations that had been made consisted of seven boats of the same construction as those at Boulogne; and not a single soldier more than was absolutely necessary to garrison the town.

One thing cannot be denied; namely, that the English, notwithstanding their immense naval force, had little or no real and genuine intelligence, as to the movements of their neighbours. Had this not been the case, the threatened invasion never could have produced a thousandth part of the sensation on the minds of the good people of England which it is known to have done. For it is a fact but too well established, that, excepting the intelligence

which they procured from infamous hired spies, the British Government gave no credence to that which was afforded them by respectable private individuals, who were actuated solely by a love of their native country.

To my own certain knowledge, many valuable hints were given to the British government, on the subject of the wood-cutting commission at Fiume, where the English had an exclusive contract. Notwithstanding which, her enemies were, all the time, felling, thick and thin, the forest in the Tyrole—Aye! and in the teeth of the very commissioner Adamici, and the British consul at Fiume.

In an early chapter of my work, I have called Buonaparte the "Arch-drover of Italy;" and, that he is richly entitled to the appellation, the following facts will shew. Not that I wish to have it inferred, that he has not, *per fas aut nefas*, rendered numerous benefits to the French nation, and to the cause of liberty and of civilization. It cannot, however, be denied, that he grossly deceived and betrayed the unfortunate people of Italy.

Previously to his coming to Venice, Buonaparte stopped at Malghera. Here it was, that he decreed the dissolution of the aristocracy, or, more properly speaking, of the oligarchical re-

public; commanded the imprisonment of the three *inquisitori di stato*, and installed, as he made the credulous people believe, *pro tempore*, the democratical government; for he well knew, that an absolute monarchy and a plebeian democracy are equally vicious.

That neither Napoleon, nor any one of his family, were democrats at heart, I think I have already shewn, and shall hereafter still further substantiate, out of their own mouths, and from documents which cannot be disproved, in my account of the exploits of the Buonaparte Family in the Milanese territories. Antecedently to this revolution in the Venetian republic, a secret article—and a most atrocious one it was—had been entered into, at the peace of Campo Formio, between France and Austria, for the sale of the Venetians. Where, then, was the necessity for the democratizing of this government? And, when he had effected his purpose, why be ashamed of a democratrical representative; which he refused to send to that congress, still further to make the credulous Venetians believe, that they might stipulate for their independence when he had already sold them, by ordering one of the most distinguished of the Venetian nobility to be sent thither, as in former times, under the old decripit oligarchical authority which he so vehemently reprobated?

His express words, when Orazio Lavezzari waited on him in the Terra Ferma (for he never came to Venice until years after), and asked him, "who are we to send to treat at Campo Formio,—one of the new order?" were "Bah, no, no, no! non voglio nessuno di quella canaglia; send a noble patrizio, and do you accompany him. You have been resident in England, have you not?" "Yes," said Lavezzari.

Previously to the institution of the municipal officers, Buonaparte ordered the list of names to be sent to him; but many individuals of respectability, who were supposed by him to be of the French party, merely in consequence of their having spoken freely as to the necessity of the republic changing its political system according to circumstances, and who had no wish for French interference, and much less for the total overthrow of the republican authority, when they were called upon and asked whether they would become members of the municipality—one of them in particular declined, and, striking out his name, left Venice and retired to his country seat, for fear of being compelled to accept the office.

This took place in the year 1796. In 1808, when Buonaparte was made King of Italy, this

gentleman, the Marquis Antonio Govion Solari, was made vice-prefect. The first time Buonaparte ever saw him, instantly recollecting the name, he said, "Ah, Marquis! I remember; you declined being a member of the municipality!" Solari had nearly forgotten the circumstance, when Buonaparte repeated, "Yes, yes! you scratched out your name, though Cornaro, Dolfin, Pisani, and many other of your friends and acquaintances were among the number. Well, well, they are all dead, and you are alive. I suppose you had your reasons for refusing; and I have mine for now appointing you to serve the office of prefect." It is a curious fact, that, in these matters, the memory of Buonaparte scarcely ever failed him.

This gentleman, the Marquis di Solari, was appointed to the government in the mountains, called the Sette Communi, exclusively inhabited by the descendants of the Cimbri, who, being beaten and dispersed near Verona, by Marius, a hundred and one years before the Christian æra, betook themselves to those mountains; and, up to this very day, have preserved their ancient customs, as well as their ancient language, which a good deal resembles the Danish and the Low Dutch. The women and children, who have never quitted their Alpine situation, nei-

ther speak nor understand the Italian; though the spot in which they live is only at the distance of about thirty miles from Vicenza.

The men, who, during the winter months, are obliged to descend into the vallies, for the purpose of procuring food for their cattle, (every thing on the earth being frozen up for eight months out of the twelve,) speak the Venetian dialect. Together, they form a population of from six-and-thirty to forty thousand souls. For the most part, they are shepherds. The country they inhabit produces scarcely any thing in the mountainous parts, excepting a a little barley, and fire-wood. The small portion of the country which is flat is planted with tobacco, which, since the revolution, they are obliged to sell to the government; whereas, before that period, the Venetian republic benevolently exempted these poor mountaineers from all kinds of public taxes, and, on account of the sterility of their soil, granted them, into the bargain, several very important privileges; deeming them sufficiently taxed already by nature, in the deprivation of the common necessaries of life; such as bread and every kind of vegetables; which articles they are obliged to fetch, either from Bassano, at a distance of five-and-twenty miles, or from

Vicenza; as they are more than two thousand feet above the level of the sea.

Indeed, the spot is considered the very Siberia of Italy. The snow begins to fall in September; and often continues on the ground until the month of May, and sometimes as late as June. To enable them to go to church or walk about, the shoes of the people are prepared, in the same manner as those of the horses are, which have to travel over ice. In their manners and customs, they somewhat resemble the feudal slaves in Poland and Russia. In their houses, as well as in their persons, they are remarkably slovenly and dirty.

There is only one house built of brick in the whole district; and that house is situated in Asiago, the capital of the Sette Communi. The rest are composed of mud and stones, and are thatched with rushes or straw. The cold is sometimes so intense, that the oil is laid in large lumps before the fire to dissolve, before it can be used. The wines and spirits are sure to be genuine; for the watery particles freeze, and the pure spirit only remains. The inhabitants are obliged to cook all their provisions with snow water. A small spring runs through the town of Asiago, but the people bathe, water their cattle, and empty their cloacas into it;

which makes it useless for any particular purpose; so that the very salutary operation of washing can only be performed during the three or four summer months.

The reason why the inhabitants are allowed the privilege of planting tobacco, which is in general prohibited by the Austrian and French authorities, is because it is so particularly beneficial to the population; as the little ploughable land which they possess, is, in a twelve-fold degree, more productive in this article, then it would be in any other grain, root, or seed; and supplies them with the means of procuring money, wherewith to purchase the first necessaries of life. They are, however, as I have just said, obliged to dispose of the whole of the said tobacco to the government.

In fact, these people, when living under the Venetian government, formed a sort of independent little republic; and scraped together a livelihood, as much by smuggling, as by their Alpine industry. When the French became masters of Italy, these poor creatures were put on the same footing with the Corsican's other Italian subjects, and subjected to the general system of taxation; as well as to that most terrible of all scourges, the conscription!

As I have before observed, the Marquis di

Solari had the misfortune to be sent amongst these people, for the purpose of organizing the said system. As may naturally be imagined, some of the poor creatures resisted the new order of things, and at a small village, called La Mara, revolted, and refused to allow the conscription to take place. Being excellent marksmen, they fired on the authorities, and compelled them, for a time, to abandon the idea of recruiting among them. Their own clergy and other of the inhabitants were selected by the French, to point out the youths who were qualified to be drawn. But being, like the Jews, all related to one another, by marriages and intermarriages, not a man of them would they give up; and the authorities were obliged to desist, until they had procured from Vicenza a military force strong enough to protect the civil powers from being shot at. Besides, as these mountains are within gun-shot of the Bavarian territories, to which the poor creatures fled whenever they were in dread of being punished, it was found prudent, even when the military had been called in to aid the civil authorities, to proceed with the greatest caution.

In the mean time, the prefect Solari, who was a very humane and excellent man, went amongst them at the risk of his life, amidst a

volley of shot, and, expostulating with them on the consequence of their futile resistance, persuaded them to return to their duty; kindly promising to use his best exertions with the head of the authorities at Milan, to get them exempted from the payment of several heavy taxes.

When Buonaparte was crowned King of Italy, the Prefect Solari was obliged to repair to Milan, with the rest of the magistrates of the Bacchillione; and, though the above affair had taken place in 1796 or 1797, when the new monarch was only a general in the army, yet, when he again saw the Prefect of Asiago, in the year 1808, he immediately recollected the above circumstance, and talked over the whole matter with the Marquis.

Speaking relatively, the inhabitants of Asiago, considering their situation, are in a state of ease; and some few of them are rich both in lands and in cattle. They, however, live nearly in a state of nature. They are unacquainted with the use of table linen, and very few of the men wear collars to their shirts. Some of them, who had been educated at the University of Padua, and at other public seminaries, on their return to Asiago, endeavoured to introduce amongst them the grada-

tion between master and servant, so indispensable in civilized society; but they were obliged to relinquish the project, as none of them would stay with masters, who would not permit them to take their meals at the same time, and at the same table, as themselves.

There never was an instance of an ox being killed in the whole Sette Communi. The only animal food consumed by them is that of sheep, very young calves, and goats. Their trade is in the above cattle, and in a few cows. They make very little butter, but save all the milk for the purpose of being made into cheese.

Providence has bestowed on the people of the Sette Communi strong minds, and a large portion of natural genius. But, they are artful, cunning, and revengeful. They have retained the broad-featured countenance of the northern nations, and have high cheek-bones, small eyes, and rather flattish noses. They are above the middle stature, and have large stout limbs. The women are rather of a masculine cast. They wait at table, and scarcely ever sit down to eat, until their husbands have finished their meals.

In the beginning of September, such of the natives as are not mechanics quit the mountains with their cattle, to find forage till the

month of May; when they again return to them. At one time, they were accustomed to make violent irruptions into the territories of the Venetians, wherever they could find pasture for their cattle; but now they are under the necessity of paying for whatever they consume.

During these months, the people of the Sette Communi resemble a nation of Amazonians; for the men and boys are all absent, taking charge of their flocks. The country partakes much of the appearance of the barren Alpine mountains in Switzerland. Every thing in the shape of a carriage is drawn by mules; as some of the passes will not admit the narrowest two-wheeled conveyance, and are, in the autumn, on account of the torrents that overflow the gravelly valleys, and again in spring, when the snow and ice are thawing, altogether impassable.

And such, indeed, was the precise situation of the Sette Communi, when the first prefect Solari took possession of his semi-barbarous situation. For nearly twenty days was he detained, with sixty of these animals, men and beast, at the foot of the mountains near the Brenta, which run down to the Tirol, at a most uncomfortable village inn. And, when at last he arrived at Asiago, the house destined for him—which, as I have before said, was the

only one in the place built of brick, and which belonged to a M. Bonhomo, residing at Vicenza—was so much out of repair, that the first night the worthy Prefect and his family slept in it, they were within an ace of being drowned in their beds, from the torrents of rain which fell into every apartment. And, in this state were they obliged to live, until a house could be built, suitable for the reception of the first magistrate; but, at his own expense!

In the mean time, the government directed, that the house of M. Bonhomo should be made tenantable and water-proof; but, as these orders were not accompanied with that necessary ingredient *l'argent*, they were of no avail, and the prefect had no alternative, but either to live in the streets, or to defray the expense of the said repairs himself.

Again: in consequence of the frost, no mortar could be used; and therefore was the Marquis Solari obliged to build entirely with wood. So that, what with the expense of the building; what with the expense of the journey; what with the damage done to his furniture; and what with the quantity of china, glass, and earthen ware that was smashed into pieces—and for which, though promised, he was never indemnified—at the end of his prefectureship,

the worthy Marquis of Solari, had the mortification of finding himself some thousands of livres *minus* by his official appointment!

" Ahi! misero chi speme in mortal cose pone!"

The mud habitations, or rather the wretched huts or stables in which men, women, and children are all huddled together, are covered, as I before observed, with rushes. To make fast the extremity of these rushes, large planks, projecting about two feet into the streets, are attached; which planks not only serve to carry off the water, but act as a shelter from the rain to walk under. The fire-place is in the middle of the apartment; and, as the houses have no chimneys, the smoke collects, of course, on the walls and ceilings, which are as black as coal pits: consequently, the water that falls from the projecting boards is as black as ink.

The clerk of the prefecture being one day suddenly caught in the rain, took shelter under one of these boards; and, not being aware of the internal construction of the habitation, he returned home in the utmost amazement; declaring, that, though he had been a great traveller, he had never before been in a country, where it rained ink; for the drops that had fallen had actually died his coat and his inexpressibles, of

a jet, as profound as is the Blacking of Mr. Turner, of Mr. Warren, of Mr. Martin, or of any of those shining characters, the nigrescent qualities of whose respective wares are chaunted in lofty verse, and are so strikingly proclaimed, in chalk, and in words really and truly sesquipedalian, on all the walls of all our highways and byways: and, for resorting to which mode of obtaining celebrity, they, individually and collectively, deserve, according to my humble opinion, the attention of our present excellent Secretary of State for the Home Department, and of their vigilant worships of Bow Street and elsewhere. All I shall say is, that, if there be not at present any regulation of police, capable of reaching these Mural Defacers of some of the handsomest edifices in and about the first metropolis in the world, it is high time there should be one! The nuisance ought forthwith to be abated. Of such men I say,

"Hic *Niger* est; hunc tu Romane caveto!"

In calling the public attention to this most offensive practice, I have done no more than my duty—*liberavi animam meam!*

But, to return to my story. The knight of the quill, observing his coat and his inexpressibles in this filthy condition, was actually on the

point of setting down to send to the celebrated M. Chaptal at Paris, an account of his new and most wonderful discovery, when he was let into the secret by one of his fellow clerks. He thereupon laughed heartily at his mistake; and ever after, when ink was wanted in the office, the clerks would humorously say, "let us go under the projections and get some; for it is of a deeper black there, than any that we can elsewhere procure."

It is most unaccountable, that, out of so many thousand travellers, who have been in Italy, none of them, as I recollect, have hitherto had the curiosity to visit this, the Siberia of Italy; or given to the world a description of its singular inhabitants. At least, I do not remember to have seen them mentioned in any of the numerous books of travels, as they are called, that have recently been published. From their very ancient origin, they appear to me to deserve a particular notice. The description I have given of them will be found strikingly correct: and I think I shall be allowed to have had some opportunities of becoming acquainted with this people, when I state, that I have done what, I will venture to say, no woman in England but myself has done; namely, lived amongst them during the space of fourteen

long months, without so much as once descending the mountains, until, as my countrymen are accustomed to say, I quitted them "for good."

During the long winter evenings, it is not at all uncommon, at Asiago, to be favoured with visits from a whole troop of hungry foxes. However, the danger to be apprehended from them is generally avoided, by the timely howling of the dogs; who scent them at a considerable distance, and thereby afford the inhabitants time to shut themselves up in their houses; whence they fire upon the crafty animals, through their oiled-paper windows; for few indeed of the houses have glass ones.

The people of Asiago bear a striking resemblance to the feudal slaves of Russia and Poland. In one of the villages, called Enego, some straw hats are manufactured. While the Marquis di Solari was Prefect, from the liberal commissions which he gave them for his numerous Venetian friends and acquaintances, and from the endeavours which he made, at his own expense, to instruct the natives in imitating those which are manufactured by the Florentines, he succeeded in getting three completed, in time to be sent to Milan and placed in the public exhibition, with the other specimens of the manufactures of Italy. One of them was

presented by his lady to the Vice-queen of Italy; the second was given to the Countess Warum, her female in waiting; and the third to Count Brema, Secretary of State; and all which were most graciously accepted.

Grieved, however, am I to announce to the world, that this worthy and upright magistrate, the Marquis Antonio Govion Broglio Solari, fell a sacrifice, in consequence of his happening to be the husband of a British-born subject, who had scorned to betray her native country; who was known to have been, at one time, *une attachée* of a great personage at the Bourbon court; and who had humanely interested herself in behalf of the unfortunate sufferers by Napoleon's accursed Milan and Berlin decrees.

And, having once more mentioned these decrees, I think I cannot do better than close my account of Venice; as well as the first volume of my labours, with the following interesting particulars, relative thereto.

The aforesaid lady was sent for to Milan; when it was proposed to her, that she should accompany some of the agents of the French Government to England; there to give immense commissions for goods, in all the different manufacturing towns of England, Scotland, and Ireland. A considerable sum was to be advanced;

but the bulk of the articles, when finished, were to be left on the hands of the manufacturers; which, it was calculated, would occasion a general ferment and even disturbance, at one and the same time throughout the united kingdom, and lead, by the assistance of certain individuals well bribed for the purpose, to partial, if not to general commotion and rebellion; and in consequence of which state of commotion, the Government would be driven to make peace—"all for the good," as the parties in question said, "of Old England."

To which the said lady gave this sensible and dignified reply—"That she was too well acquainted with the spirit of the British Government to suppose it could be driven by the inebriety of a rude mob, to conclude a peace which should be disgraceful and ruinous to the nation."

She was thereupon answered—"That there were many persons in England, and even in the House of Commons, who were adverse to the war."

"It required no ghost," she replied, "to bring me that intelligence; since I am convinced of it better than you can tell me, as long as it continued to be a political war; which never can, and never will be generally popular, in a commercial country like England, the

emporium and the monopolizer of all the commerce of the world. These very partizans of whom you are speaking no longer exist; all are now united in the common cause of their country. Your decrees from Berlin and from Milan, have changed the very character of the war. It is no longer a political one. These fallacious measures of yours have made it a national one; and by that step you have done more for England, than England ever before did for herself. You have united all parties. There is now but one voice. Your decrees for burning her manufactures whenever they shall be found on the Continent, have drawn all the waters of the three islands to one point; and, until you can contrive to have a navy superior to the navy of England, their waters will extinguish all the fires that you may think proper to kindle."

Thus spake the aforesaid lady. "You forget," replied those who heard her, "that you are now an Italian subject."

"And therefore," rejoined she, *con molto spirito*, "I speak as an honest British subject ought to speak. I should be unworthy of my birthright and of your confidence, if I were to deceive you. Whosever subject I may be, I have ever acted upon principle, as well as from

inclination. ' *Ubi boni, ibi patria.*' I certainly wish well to Italy; but I never will basely assist in the destruction of the country that gave me birth, and in which I first beheld the light of heaven!"

" You take up the matter too seriously, Madam!"

" I am very glad you think so, Sir. I am accustomed to speak plainly. I beg, therefore, that I may be allowed to return quietly to Venice."

" Then you are determined to do nothing for a country which has so long cherished you with a maternal affection?"

" If my humble abilities could be advantageously and honourably exerted, my *amour propre* would induce me to serve, not only the country of my adoption, but every other country. Women, however, in these matters, cut but a miserable figure!"

" But, not women like you, Madam!"

" Then, Sir, if you allow me to possess a grain of common sense, I shall consider your urging this matter any further as an insult to my understanding."

The person with whom I had this disagreeable conversation then retired; after which, I heard some one in another room say " *Eh bien!*

mon ami, si elle ne veux pas, que voulez-vous faire?" The same individual speedily returned, and began again, by saying—

" I am very glad, Madam, to find that you are the wife of a gentleman who is so amazingly rich that a hundred thousand livres is considered a trifle by you."

" Unfortunately, Sir, my husband is not rich. The revolution has taken good care of that! But his wife will never aggravate his misfortunes, by compromising what is dearer to him than life—his honour!"

" Why, you were not so mighty scrupulous, Madam, when you were employed by the Princess Lamballe, and by the Queen of France, and by her sister, the Queen of Naples!"

" No, Sir, I had then no reason. I was permitted to take copies of the letters I was charged with, that I might not commit myself; I have kept them to this day, and will show you them, whenever you please; though they merely related to family matters."

" So you are pleased to say, Madam; and of course, I must not dispute a lady's word! But, however, suppose you return to Venice, and reflect on what I have been saying to you—"

Here I stopped him short, in the middle of his speech, and told him I had already sufficiently

reflected upon the matter, and that nothing could divert me from my determination.

"Well, all I can say, Madam, is, that I am sorry you should stand so much in your own light."

He then handed me to my carriage, and I returned immediately to my husband. So greatly was I agitated, and so much what had occurred had changed my countenance, that my man servant asked whether I was not ill, and whether he should not step and get me some refreshments? I told him I was not ill. I, however, was shortly after obliged to stop the carriage, and take a glass of water. Indeed, the bare mention of the names of the illustrious persons last mentioned, and the recollection of their cruel fate, has ever affected me, and continues to do so to this very hour.

On reaching home, I instantly made my husband acquainted with the whole transaction; at which he was much surprised; as he had not the slightest suspicion that I had been sent for on such a piece of business, but supposed it to relate solely to the arrests that had taken place, about that time, of all the English; and as a Mr. Parr, an English gentleman, supposed to be the husband of a Venetian lady, had been just arrested, though a constant resident in the

Venetian territories, and principally at Venice, my husband conjectured that the French agents wished to be informed, whether or not they were British subjects?

However, a few days after, coming from a ball which was given at the theatre La Fenice, an officer called at our casino; and being informed where we were gone, he waited our return. Scarcely had we reached home, when the said officer knocked at our door. Upon which the servant said, "O, that's the man, I suppose, who has been asking, three or four times this evening, for my mistress." It was now between three or four o'clock in the morning. My husband, seizing his pistols, ran to the window, and asked who was there? Upon which, the officer cried out, "You must open the door, for I want to come in." My husband was on the point of firing at the fellow, but I prevailed on him to hear what he had to say in defence of his extraordinary conduct. On entering the casino, and seeing my husband, whom he had formerly served in a menial capacity, when he was employed under the republic, the man was so astounded, that for some minutes he could not utter a syllable. At length, he stammered out, "I am ordered to keep a sharp look-out upon that lady."

"Well! there she is," said my husband, taking me by the hand, "look at her; but I am now going to bed with her, and if you dare to offer the smallest violence, or attempt to come into the room, I will that moment blow your brains out. Shew me your authority."

"I have none," said the officer, "but that which I have just mentioned;" for he was only one of the runners of the police.

On the next morning I was allowed to go to my country residence at Treviso, accompanied by this man, who followed my footsteps, even to church. For the two first days, I only walked about my garden, and on the third and fourth, upon the high road; and, on my return, I always gave directions to have him well taken care of previous to my taking my own breakfast. On the fifth day, he left me to take my walk by myself; when, without taking any thing with me but what I had on, I set off in a post-chaise for Venice, and, scraping together a few hundred dollars, I hired a fishing boat, as I knew that the British squadron was then blockading the ports in the Adriatic; but, contrary winds detained me in this open boat for more than three days; when I came up with Admiral Fremantle's ship, which took me to Malta; from which place I wrote to my husband, and

then set off for Sicily, where I continued until the peace.

Whether this business was planned at Paris, at Milan, or at Venice, I am unable to say; but it took place while Napoleon was in Russia. A criminal process was commenced against my husband; and Heaven only knows what would have been the consequence, had not a change in the government happily taken place!

CHAPTER XXIX.

VENICE.

THE BUONAPARTE FAMILY IN THE VENETIAN TERRITORY.

Further Anecdotes illustrative of the French Rule in the Venetian Territory.....Anecdote of Buonaparte and St. Mark's Place.....Parisian Gasconade.....The Imperial Whitewashers exposed.....Anecdote of Fouché and Buonaparte..... Dr. O'Meara and his "Voice from St. Helena".....Anecdote of Buonaparte's Escape from Elba.....General Character of his Government in Italy.....His Encouragement of Literary Men, contrasted with that of another great Hero.

A FEW more anecdotes illustrative of the conduct of Buonaparte towards the people of Venice, and I have done. As I have already stated, Buonaparte never had the courage to pay a visit to that city, until he had been crowned Emperor of France and King of Italy; which event took place in 1810. Nevertheless, in the year 1796, shortly after he had upset and

revolutionized the Venetian government, he caused a picture to be painted of himself and staff, in which he was represented as reviewing the cavalry in the Piazza di San Marco; and from which picture a print was actually engraved and publicly sold at Paris! Now, to those who know any thing of Venice, and that St. Mark's Place is paved with large broad flagstones, and was never intended for equestrian prancings, the absurdity of the thing will be sufficiently apparent.

This reminds me of another piece of Parisian gasconade, which occurred while I was in Poland. I say "Parisian," for, according to their own account, all Frenchmen are Parisians.

On my return to Italy from Sweden and Russia, dining one day with the Princess Lubormiski, at Warsaw, during my visit to that amiable and accomplished lady, one of the party was a Parisian traveller, whose tongue went at a quicker pace than his body. Being asked, in the course of conversation, how he liked the city of Venice, the impudent braggart replied, with the utmost *sang froid*, that, "he could not tell us much about Venice, as he had only stopped there to *change horses!!*"

This anecdote I introduce by way of a caution to such of my readers as may be too much

in the habit of swallowing with greedy appetite every thing that is told them by the mercenary advocates of the revolutionary system, respecting the wonderful exploits of Buonaparte, which have been so loudly trumpeted forth by individuals, who have doubtless had weighty reasons for so doing; and several of them, aware of the gullibility of my countrymen, and who have taken for their motto the answer of Vespasian to his son Titus, when the latter reproached him with having laid a tax upon a certain article—

"Lucri bonus odor, ex re qualibet—"

are said to have reaped a tolerable harvest from their base and filthy employ.

Thanks, however, to the native good sense of my countrymen, I am happy to see that they are rapidly returning to their sober senses, and that the writings of the whole train of *Imperial White-washers* are sinking into that contempt, which the utter worthlessness of the trash they have been imposing upon the public, so loudly called for.

That Buonaparte did more mischief in the course of his reign than can be redeemed for centuries, and that he is more to be condemned for the good which he left undone, than for the evil which he accomplished, are facts which

cannot be denied. It must, nevertheless, be granted by all, that an individual who had risen from nothing, to such an unexampled pitch of domination, must have been in possession of most extraordinary talents. Indeed, not to accord to him an amazing tact, in discriminating the objects that could be rendered most conducive to his several views of aggrandizement, would be the height of folly and of ignorance.

I like not to disturb the dead. I must, however, be here permitted to make a short disgression. Since the masterly castigation which "Le Docteur" O'Meara's white-washing performance recently met with from a most able *quarterly* critic, it is with considerable reluctance that I am induced to "draw its frailties from their dread abode;" but "Monsieur Le Docteur" appears to me—to speak in the mildest terms—to have been, in one instance, so completely imposed upon by the Imperial hoaxer, while at St. Helena, that I cannot withstand the temptation of referring to it

In page 163 of the first volume, of his "*Voice from St. Helena*," Buonaparte is made to say to the Doctor, "Fouché is a miscreant of all colours, a priest, a terrorist, and one who took an active part in many bloody scenes in the revolution. He is a man who can worm

all your secrets out of you, with an air of calmness and unconcern. He is very rich, but his riches were badly acquired. There was a tax upon gambling-houses in Paris; but, as it was an infamous way of gaining money, I did not like to profit by it, and therefore ordered, that the amount of the tax should be appropriated to an hospital for the poor. It amounted to some millions; but Fouché, who had the collecting of the impost, put many of them into his own pockets, and it was impossible for me to discover the real yearly sum total."

Now, that Fouché was the infamous character which the moral imperial hoaxer here represents him to have been, little doubt can, I believe, be entertained, since he was the active instrument of most of Buonaparte's own atrocious misdeeds: so much so, that the latter did not dare to remove him from the office which he held, for fear of his disclosing some of the many enormities which he had directed him to put into execution: however, at last, to get rid of this worse than *bourreau*, Buonaparte sent him ambassador to Rome, with the title of Duke d'Otranto. Now, if Fouché was the "miscreant of all colours" which Buonaparte represents him to have been, what a superlative "miscreant" must the man have been, who could have promoted such a

monster of infamy to the post of ambassador, and advanced him to a dukedom!

As to Fouché's having appropriated the money arising from the plunder of the gaming houses, "to an hospital for the poor," it is false—*falcissimo*—as the greater part of Josephine's revenue, which Buonaparte allows to have been very large, was drawn from that source of infamy, and Fouché was charged with the task of exacting from the gaming houses, for that purpose, a certain weekly sum, which was regularly transmitted by him, every Monday morning, into the hands of the aforesaid "most virtuous queen." So much for Buonaparte's not liking to profit by such an "infamous mode of getting money!" In charity to "*Le Docteur*," I am obliged to consider him as the greatest *hoaxee*—(may I coin the word?)—in Christendom!

The truth is, that no work was ever less calculated, than the "*Voice from St. Helena*," to give the world correct impressions, with regard to the real character of the whole Buonaparte race, from brother Jerome up to the parent stock, "la Madre Letizia," whose piety, the Doctor tells the good people of England, is so amazingly great, that the old lady's thoughts are "*entirely divided between God and her son!*"

And how, indeed, should the Doctor's book be otherwise? Were not nearly all his facts taken down from the mouth of the murderer of the Duke d'Enghien himself? Would it not, therefore, be just as great a piece of folly to believe them, as it would have been in the jury who recently tried the assassin Thurtell, to have acquitted him, on the solemn asseveration of— "I am innocent; so help me, God?"

That theNapoleon fever is greatly abated, and that the pulse of the people has returned to its true beat, the Doctor must, by this time, be pretty well convinced. He has done wisely in not attempting a reply to the strictures to which I have alluded; for facts are stubborn things, which cannot be got over by empty assertions. Since their appearance, the "*Voice from St. Helena*" has become— "*vox*, et præterea nihil." I assert fearlessly, that my readers will find, in my next volume, under the head of "The Buonaparte Family in the Milanese territory," a more faithful history of the rise, progress, decline, and fall of that family, than they will do in all the writings of all Napoleon's numerous thick and thin panegyrists and defenders.

I am not setting myself as the apologist of Sir Hudson Lowe. His best praise is to be found in the abuse that has been heaped on him

by the agents of the fugitive from Elba: but this I will say, that all the whinings and whimperings about "barbarous treatment," come with a shocking grace from the man, who had treated some of our countrymen and countrywomen with the utmost cruelty.

Of his brutal conduct towards Mrs. Watson I have already given a detail. To which I may add, that on Lord Stewart, the present Marquis of Londonderry, coming with the Emperor of Austria, to Venice, after the happy downfall of her cruel oppressor, and beholding her emaciated and debilitated condition, he generously interested himself with the British Government in her behalf, and procured for her a pension of £50 a year for life, as the widow of a man who, for three and forty years, had served his country, in different capacities, with fidelity.

Let me also beg leave to tell Doctor Barry O'Meara, late surgeon, that Buonaparte ordered the arrest of Mrs. Spencer Smith, and the arrest of the Marchioness Catherine Hyde Solari, merely because they were English-born subjects, treating them both like state prisoners, and manfully setting a guard, with loaded muskets and *drawn swords* at the doors of their very bed rooms! Now, to put the thing more home, I

ask Doctor O'Meara, who is no longer a Benedict, how he would like that a man should stand at the bed-room door of his lady, with a *drawn sword* in his hand? The Doctor can, I am sure, answer my query, more readily than he can refute the strictures of the Quarterly Reviewers; and therefore I beg him to do it.

The only crime of these ladies was, that they were the subjects of a nation, whose government had baffled all his ambitious views. For Buonaparte not only abhorred the English, but England itself, and has often exclaimed in the presence of the last-mentioned lady, "bisogna scacciare questa nazione infama dalla carta geografrica!" He detested us in his heart; whatever he might have endeavoured to make the English *incrédules* at St. Helena believe. He was too artful to condemn, in their presence, the nation that had spared him the ignominous fate of his brother-in-law Murat; and therefore it was, that he expended his rancour on those who had the immediate care of his person. As to his saying, that the English were a deceitful nation, I am absolutely astounded, that he should have found any one ready to listen to—to swallow—to put upon paper—and finally to give to the world, such a ridiculous fallacy.

As I have alluded to Buonaparte's escape

from Elba, the recollection of which escape rendered vigilance on the part of the Governor of St. Helena a thousand-fold more imperative, I shall here introduce a short anecdote or two.

When Buonaparte abdicated, in 1814, I happened to be at Zante, one of the Ionian Islands. On my return to Venice, I was credibly informed, by a person who was strongly attached to him, that, previously to his quitting Paris for Elba, he had said, in confidence, to Marshal Ney, "Italy will always be a resource for me." And indeed, if he could have made up his mind to limit his ambition to the government of that country, and to give to it a *bonâ fide* representative constitution, he would not have been suffered to remain a prisoner at Elba for eight and forty hours; all Italy would have risen up as one man, and flocked to his standard, from their natural abhorrence to the Germans. But, the truth is, that he had made up his mind, from the first, to return; and had never seriously abandoned the idea of again becoming the sovereign of France.

The correspondence, and the visits backwards and forwards, from France to Elba, were innumerable. Buonaparte's apparent indifference and resignation to his fate, lulled the suspicions of the sovereigns who had banished

him to that pleasant island, where he could almost behold both France and Italy.

To keep them still further in the dark, with regard to his future intentions, Buonaparte set about building, and expended considerable sums at Elba; as if he had really determined on taking up his abode in the island for the remainder of his days. A gentleman, on his return from one of these trips to Elba, on being catechized as to the fact of Buonaparte's activity in his new residence, and as to his preparations for new buildings, answered, "O! he'll never live to finish all the plans which he is determined to execute. Few people, you know, who build palaces ever live to enjoy them. His family, however, may." This very person, however, must, at the time, have been in the secret of his intended escape from Elba; as it took place only a day or two after he had left the island.

On the evening that the news of this escape reached Venice, I happened to be at the *conversazione* of the once celebrated Madame Marina Benzona, now married to Rangoni When Marshal Chatlaire entered, he announced to us what had happened. This gentleman, who belonged to the Low Countries, was then in the service of Austria, as he had been for years;

he was therefore one of the class for whom Buonaparte, during the last war in Italy, had caused a general amnesty to be offered, provided they would quit the Austrian service and return home, or accept of rank in the French army. In this amnesty, however, Marshal Chatlaire was not included. On the contrary, Buonaparte had offered 10,000 franks to any one who should bring him, dead or alive, to the head-quarters. "Now," said the Marshal to us, after relating the fact of Buonaparte's escape from Elba, "I really begin to fancy that my head is in danger;" adding, "I am greatly mistaken if this war does not turn out far more murderous and sanguinary, than any we have hitherto witnessed. Unless Europe shall consent to be united against this aggression, in six months' time there will not be such a thing as a legitimate sovereign on any of its thrones."

Buonaparte's escape produced little or no sensation at Venice, as it had been foreseen for a long time; except amongst the few partizans who had lost their employ in consequence of his exile; and even amongst those individuals, it was looked upon as a sort of desperate determination, on the part of Buonaparte, to die nobly, rather than tamely to submit to outlive, in

a pitifully small island, his former unequalled grandeur.

But, to return to my subject. That I am no advocate for the Napoleon system of legislation, I think I have pretty plainly shown. I have many weighty reasons for regretting, that it should ever have predominated in Italy, and especially in the once flourishing and happy Venetian States. Truth, however, compels me at the same time to declare, and it would indeed be the height of folly to deny the fact, that the French sway was infinitely more congenial, and more generally advantageous, to all classes of the people of Italy, than the system of government which the Austrians have organized for them.

It was Buonoparte's constant practice to employ thousands of the labouring poor on the high roads; not as they now are engaged, from necessity, in waylaying and in plundering the unoffending traveller, but in keeping those roads in good order, and in repairing the fortifications and the public buildings. The revenues of the Venetian states were principally spent by the French amongst the inhabitants, in affording encouragement to the fine arts, in erecting schools for the education of youth, in maintaining academies for men of science and

literature, and in giving salaries to persons of the bar, for devising means for the more prompt administration of justice.

Napoleon, too, whenever an author had the good fortune to meet with a Mecænas ready to present a work to him, and to say a good word in behalf of the writer, would, as I have before observed, always take a hundred or two copies, and never fewer than fifty, on his own private account; besides making his staff subscribe for another hundred, by way of giving encouragement to literature. With the present Emperor of Austria, however, and with some of his brothers—who certainly understand *cruscamente*, the meaning of the verb *avere*, but not the meaning of the verb *dare*—the only return they make to a poor author on such an occasion, is a letter of thanks—that is to say, *soddisfanno tutti gli Artisti, à modo loro, con grazie*—which said *grazie*, as all the world knows, is very unsubstantial diet!

During the Emperor of Austria's first visit to Venice, as the sovereign of those territories, he accepted every thing, of every description, that was presented to him, without once loosening his purse-strings. In short, there was a most striking difference, in this respect, between the

two Emperors; for Napoleon was really generous in these matters.

The same difference appears also to have existed between Napoleon and a certain great hero of our own country. I have been credibly informed—and the fact can be contradicted if it be untrue—that a lady, who had written a work in this country, in honour of the illustrious person's numerous gallant achievements, applied, when it was ready for publication, to an honourable officer, who not only kindly subscribed to the work himself, but used his influence with the hero of it, to procure the lady in question the honour of personally presenting it to the Conqueror of the Conqueror.

The day for so doing was fixed. The authoress was received by the first captain of the age in the most gentlemanly and benignant manner. Most unequivocally did he express his grateful acknowledgments to the lady, for the time and the attention which she had bestowed on her narrative of his warlike exploits. He complimented her highly on the manner in which it was executed; and, on conducting her to the door, he furthermore expressed his earnest desire, to know in what way it was in his power to compensate her for all her trouble.

The work was published. It had the high honour of being dedicated, by permission, to His Gracious Majesty, King George the Fourth, as well as to his Royal Highness the Duke of York and Albany. The too sanguine authoress had caused it to be got up in the most splendid style of printing. But, alas! she soon found, that to promise was one thing, but that to take the work and pay for it was another! To be brief. The result was, that the lady became cruelly embarrassed, in consequence of the heavy expense she had incurred in her humble attempt to immortalize the deeds of the hero in question.

In this situation, she made her incarcerated condition known to the consort of the said hero. But, *proh pudor!* what was her astonishment at finding the copy of her work sent back to her, by the wife of the hero, after it had been kept six months; and a trifle handed to her, in a degrading manner, through the hands of a common porter at the door of a public office, less in amount, than the sum she received for a single copy, from a sugar-baker in the City! And this, too—"tell it not in Gath, publish it not in the streets of Ascalon!"—to an unfortunate female, of birth and of education, in a strange country, separated, at the distance of thousands of miles, from her husband and family, without

friends, and without any other resources, for the moment, than those which she might derive from the exercise of her talents; since she had recently been shipwrecked in the port of Boulogne, and had thereby become deprived of every thing she possessed in the world!

Napoleon had many crimes to answer for; but the crime of ingratitude towards men of genius and talent was not amongst the number. I am far from being one of his admirers. I am, however, for giving the devil his due. If the above harsh treatment of the unfortunate lady in question should, by possibility, have arisen out of accidental negligence or error, the parties will thank me for thus noticing it. It is never too late to atone for an injury; especially when that injury has been unintentionally inflicted. *Meglio tardo che mai!*

The following anecdote will serve to show the opinion of the lower orders of the people of Venice, as to the superiority of the French system of government, over that of the Austrian. One of those lively set of fellows called the *Barcajuoli*, on being reprimanded by his master, for his marked indifference towards the present order of things, and threatened with being discharged, if he obstinately persevered in not being reconciled to the new government,

was asked, how he could forget the plunderings which his countrymen had experienced from Massina, Lecchi, and others, during the reign of the French, whom he was so partial to? "O! yes," replied the man. "I very well recollect their d—d system of equality in putting your excellency on a level with me, but in not raising me to an equality with your excellency: but then, the French did every thing with such a good grace, and at least, left behind them manure for the land; but as for these cursed Germans, they eat up our provisions—suspect our honesty—pay no one a livre—ill treat us—and would empty the very temples of Cloacina, send off their contents to their own country, and deprive us of the means of cultivating our fields, if they could do so without any cost to themselves! And then, the scandalous way in which they treat our noble and worthy old masters, will ever make me detest them. I should be extremely sorry to be discharged from your generous service; yet, if I were forced to starve for it, I could never make up my mind to serve a nation, which has basely made a purchase of my native country. That Buonaparte sold us, is not much to be wondered at, for he was a d—d scoundrel, without any grain of religion; but, the Emperor of Ger-

many—he, you know, is a true Catholic, a legitimate prince, no usurper, and Italian born into the bargain! Now, I don't know who is the worst of the two; as the proverb tells us, that 'the receiver is as bad as the thief.' For my part, I shall ever consider the man who bought us, and the man who sold us, as our mortal enemies." Having ended his speech, the poor fellow left the room, exclaiming, with tears in his eyes, "O! la mia povera Venezia!" Thousands of individuals are of the same way of thinking with this honest Barcajuola.

Some important anecdotes, illustrative of the conduct of the Austrian Authorities in the Venetian provinces, I reserve for my next volume.

END OF VOL. I.

LONDON:
PRINTED BY COX AND BAYLIS, GREAT QUEEN STREET.

ERRATA.

Page	line	
22,	18,	for *Horse* read *Lion.*
30,	3,	for *years* read *centuries.*
51,	10,	for *tabbara* read *tabaro.*
66,	17,	for *quaranta* read *quarantia.*
100,	21,	the words " *On their* " have dropped out.
229,	8,	for *Mascaron* read *Mascarsson.*
264,	24,	for *Hermil* read *Hemmel.*

21, 22

2 vols : [iii] - xxxii, 364, [2];
[ii] - xii, 347, [1] pp.

Lacking both half-titles